

## 2015 January **Cinthia Priest Becomes FIRST Female Editor!**

**W**hile contemplating my first editorial as editor, I reminisced about all the events that have occurred over the years to bring me to this point. Rather than bore you with a listing of my credentials — which I can supply should anyone desire such a document — I decided rather to search for that one event that started it all — my tipping point for a love of trains, my point of no return.

I thought about my career in publishing. While my company's first launch into the railfan publication arena wasn't surrounded by accolades, it was hardly a flop. That *Santa Fe Boxcars* book had a singular focus (perhaps too focused in retrospect): to show nearly all ATSF boxcars in color so modelers could have a thorough reference. It brings us much satisfaction that numerous manufacturers have released models using material from that book. Our company's second book, *The Santa Fe Diesel: Volume 1*, catapulted me into the brotherhood of railroad book authors. While it never made it to the New York Times best sellers list, or even on the radar for that matter, it was an instant hit among Santa Fe diesel fans, especially modelers. My goal for that two-volume series was to not only publish the history of Santa Fe's diesels, but also to present an organized photo reference for modelers.

Okay, so my railroad-related writing and editing had its beginning in the early 1990s, but what about model railroading? One of my fondest memories is when legendary editor Gordon Odegard personally complimented me on my modified ATSF GP35 at an NMRA convention. That diesel won first place at our Division meet as well as *Model Railroader's* Young Author contest (published in

*NMRA Magazine* Editor Cinthia Priest

November 1988). I then began modeling to win contests (wanting to compete with former *NMRA MAGAZINE* editor Stephen Priest), and I won first place at both the Division and Region levels for my scratchbuilt Boeing flatcar model, which also earned me a Merit Award. It was at those NMRA meets that I received so much encouragement (okay, some prodding as well) from fellow modelers to participate in the Achievement Program. Members of my local Division (Turkey Creek) are exceptionally welcoming. A key few have made a lasting impression on me with their words of encouragement, including Larry Long, MMR; Pat Harriman, MMR; Lou Seibel; Paul Richardson, MMR; and MMRs Miles and Fran Hale to name but a few. I continue to model, but haven't entered contests in quite awhile. I shall have to remedy that.

I would have to say that the critical point in my life that started it all was Labor Day weekend 1987. I had just started college and met this very outgoing guy who had lots of train pictures, and I mean lots! Curious about that hobby, I found myself in the passenger seat of a 1978 Toyota Celica flying down Kansas Highway 177 pacing a hotshot Santa Fe intermodal through the Flint Hills. The skilled hands at the wheel belonged to my partner for life: Stephen Priest. My life hasn't been the same since.

I have big shoes to fill, now that I'm in the driver's seat. I want to thank Kevin at White River Productions, NMRA President Charlie Getz, and the NMRA Board of Directors for appointing me editor. I look forward to serving and promoting this great hobby we all enjoy!

## 2015 January

**Charlie Fackler earned Master Model Railroader 539.**

**Harley "Skip" Luyk earned Master Model Railroader 541.**

## 2015 March

**William "Bill" Messecar earned Master Model Railroader 543.**

## Ambassadors

**F**or me, this past January was a whirlwind. I spent a wonderful weekend in sunny Florida at the Cocoa Beach RPM meet. Two weeks later, I flew to snowy Massachusetts to attend the Amherst Railway Society's annual train show. Although both trips required completely different attire (shorts versus heavy coats), both events had one thing in common — enthusiastic model railroaders sharing their love for the hobby.

Amherst's show, held annually in January, fills 350,000 square feet throughout four buildings! A snowstorm on Saturday hin-

*Below: NER President Scooter Youst touts the benefits of being an NMRA member at the Amherst Train Show in Springfield, Massachusetts. — Cinthia Priest photo*



## Observation Car

NMRA Magazine Editor Cinthia Priest

dered attendance somewhat; however, the show still had a terrific turnout.

While I made my way around the complex, searching for a very specific model (an RSD-12) to no avail, I found the Northeastern Region's president, Scooter Youst, promoting the NMRA and a local Division. As I watched from a distance, Scooter did all the great things an ambassador of the hobby should do. He stood out in front of the booth and initiated conversations with future members. (We should consider everyone with an interest in model railroading "future members.") Scooter had informational brochures about the organization, the Region, and Division readily available with contact information. Most importantly, Scooter let his genuine love of the hobby and enthusiasm for the NMRA permeate his conversations.

We are all ambassadors — for the NMRA and the hobby — always and everywhere. Don't wait for them to come to you, seek out future members. The NMRA is an inclusive organization with immeasurable as well as tangible benefits, and we should reach out to anyone with an interest in the hobby. Why would anyone want to keep all this fun to themselves?

(Your Division or Region can have a similarly impressive and professionally produced banner as the Seacoast Division's shown in the photo. See the December 2012 issue for more information on the NMRA's special pricing for this promotional item.)

*Cinthia Priest*



## 2015 April President's Report

### A Mid-Year Report

**I**n February, the Board of Directors, officers, and invited Department heads met to conduct Association business. We meet twice a year: at "Mid-Year," the traditional name for the winter business meeting; and at our Annual Meeting held in conjunction with the National Convention. The annual BOD meeting is held the weekend before the National Convention begins.

Because of deadlines, I wrote this column just before the mid-year meeting took place. Allow me to share with you not only the edited report I made to the BOD, because it contains a good snapshot of where the NMRA stands, but also a few notes on other topics discussed.

The major topic of concern was the future of the hobby and of the NMRA. All is not doom and gloom by any stretch. Because of forces often beyond our control, there are neither quick fixes nor easy answers. We will overcome any obstacles, and the hobby will continue. Of that, I have no doubt. We also began discussions on a Member's Code of Conduct to deal with the very few who do damage to the NMRA. More discussion will follow in Portland, Oregon, and we welcome your thoughts. I will report on the results of all of these topics and more later.

In my report to the BOD, I outlined five areas to discuss: modernization, communication, integration, conformance and program/function re-examination. We have made significant progress in all areas, although we have much remaining to do.

**Modernization.** How we do business is changing, as is the hobby. Increasingly, we have to rely on a shrinking population of volunteers, especially competent fungible volunteers able and willing to tackle complex projects. Finding new leaders is especially challenging. We continue to update the bylaws slowly to simplify and better define the distinction between our not-for-profit corporate side and our hobby association side. For too long, we have blurred that line to the point that we define everything equally in ways that frankly are confusing and unneces-

sary. As with all things volunteer, more important projects intrude on time! The lack of volunteers and fear of volunteer burnout means, as President, I must carefully set our priorities and what we ask of them. Each task must be of vital importance with tangible results central to the NMRA's mission. This becomes relevant, for example, as we discuss our long-range plan — NMRA 2019 — and its implementation.

**Communication.** Here, we have made great strides, thanks to Gerry Leone and his crew, Ben Sevier, Tom Draper, and Stephen and Cinthia Priest. Our former editor, Stephen Priest, is now editor of *Railroad Model Craftsman*. The *NMRA MAGAZINE* continues to improve and thrive, and adding Cinthia Priest as our editor is a wonderful evolutionary step. There has been some concern expressed by a few members about a "conflict," but separate ad managers and protocols are in place to insure financial integrity. I see no issues other than perception. Stephen and Cinthia are married. That is the beginning and end of the conflict allegations. They have collaborated on many for-profit magazines and projects in the past without issue. Our attorney does not see a conflict, and neither do I. Further, *RMC* wishes to strengthen ties with the NMRA, and we also have an excellent working relationship with *Model Railroader*. The new President of Kalmbach is an NMRA member, for example, and *MR* continues to mention the NMRA favorably in reviews and articles.

### President's Car



### NMRA President Charlie Getz

The *e-Bulletin* continues to be well received. The *Infoblast* continues to provide information to Regions, and when a computer problem recently halted it, members noticed its absence. We have corrected that. The Marketing Department is moribund as we seek a new Marketing Director. We have had some expressions of interest and continue to seek and evaluate candidates. In the PCR, Frank Markovich, MMR, and Mike Blumenstadt have morphed the "Build-a-Memory" layout idea into a fabulous teaching vehicle, building small layouts in N and HO at a series of workshops. They will write this up for the magazine as well as create a series for EduTrain.

The Gallery Exhibit is back on track. A one-year hold-up on final approval by the State was due to internal issues within California State Railroad Museum (CSRM) unrelated to either the Gallery Exhibit or Library. I recently met with CSRM curator Paul Hammond and as a result, sent a letter to renew the process. The good news is we caused none of the delay nor did it have negative effect on the projects. I will continue to report our progress on this crucial effort, but so far, so good.

Our revamped website is slowly improving. Ben Sevier and his crew have done a magnificent job and continue to work with members to make it even better. We have launched EduTrain, our template for a program of clinics to assist Regions and Divisions in educating members on a wide range of topics. Started by Jim Six



## 2015 April President's Report Cont.

of the Michiana Division, Bob Blake is now overseeing this exciting new program and has done yeoman work unveiling it at multiple Region conventions over the past year.

Left to do? Finish the previously mentioned items and resolve the alias address problems some members have encountered in trying to contact us using the addresses given in the magazine. Ben Sevier is correcting any problems. We also re-examined the practicality of offering a digital version of the *NMRA MAGAZINE* and found it economically impractical at this point. While some cite other examples of digital model railroad magazines, there is no evidence any of them is yet profitable, and digitalizing is far more than a simple pdf file conversion of a print magazine. The higher cost just does not justify doing so, especially given the cost of producing both a digital version and a print version for the 90 percent or so of our members who do not wish to receive an electronic magazine. We also continue to work on methods to provide the magazine overseas.

Integration. This means that for U.S. Regions/Divisions, tax-exempt status under our umbrella would be provided with a minimum of paperwork and with complete local control over finances and activities. We await a final ruling from the IRS and clarification of the procedures to be used to launch this program. Our attorney, Bob Amsler, has used one Region and one Division as a trial to determine how best to proceed. This effort is a priority because it is crucial to our future.

Conformance. In 2006, the BOD authorized a self-certification program to encourage industry to obtain Conformance Warrants in a manner and timing that suited their needs and did not rely on our few overburdened volunteers. At my request, Standards and Conformance Department Manager Di Voss developed procedures and forms to accomplish this goal. I met with industry leaders in Atlanta and Cleveland to explain our goals and the importance to them to conform their

products to NMRA Standards. After all, without conformance, their products simply will not work with those of other manufacturers, leading to customer frustration. Setting and enforcing standards is a cornerstone of the NMRA. Of course, our primary mission remains education. Over time, I hope manufacturers will see the advantages of not only obtaining a conformance warrant, but also in proudly displaying it in packaging and advertising. One day, I hope that no model railroader would consider buying a product that does not conform to NMRA Standards.

At Cleveland, several DCC manufacturers asked us to ensure a European group did not establish European-only DCC standards. We reconvened the DCC Working Group to prevent this, and that group has been working to ensure there is only one DCC Standard.

We will roll out LCC, formerly NMRANet, at Portland. As with DCC, I do not favor, nor would recommend competing standards for LCC. Our test for standards is simple: interoperability and free use of otherwise proprietary technology. The former means we do not approve competing technologies; the latter means that we do not approve purely proprietary technologies. LCC has the potential to be our hobby's next "Big Thing." We are finishing our copyright approvals for the terminology. Although there have been past articles on this technology, I cannot begin to describe all it can do, but it may prove to be another evolutionary step in model railroading. Stay tuned for more information. We have also been asked by the folks using Bruce Chubb's CMRI system for a path to ensure its continued viability, and we discussed the best way to do so.

Re-examination of Programs and Functions. We have looked critically at what the NMRA does and how we do it. Subject to CSRM finalization, the Kalmbach Library will move to the California State Railroad Library to be administered there at the same or less cost as we have historically spent. With this, our members gain access to the largest



## 2015 April President's Report Cont.

railroad library west of the Mississippi and one of the largest in the world. I am taking steps to ensure a dedicated partial position to serve our members' research needs.

We sold the Headquarters building last year, and Treasurer Frank Koch deserves a lot of credit for both the sale and move. Chief Administrative Officer Jenny Hendricks and staff deserve a major thank you for the move. We continue to re-examine programs such as the SIG program, which is slowly expanding, the Achievement Program and allegations (remedied) of inconsistent judging, and the "Pike Registry." The venerable Pike Registry program has been moribund for years and harkens back to an era of "vesties" and open frame motors. Rather than "kill it" as un-needed, I suggest repurposing it as a Directory of Layouts that members traveling from out of area can visit. A U.S. prohibition against publishing personal member information precludes publishing of a General Membership Directory as was last published in 1973. Re-forming the "Pike Registry" into a "Layout Visit Registry" would encourage willing members to allow publication of their contact and layout information, which we could then provide to other members — another NMRA membership benefit.

Outstanding Items. There are several items I hope to emphasize as President. The EHB redraft is one, as mentioned. We need to finish vertical integration ASAP. We need to kick-start self-certification and

get that going. If the Conformance Warrant becomes something of value in marketing, we all win, and the NMRA becomes "relevant" again. The European Region is an exciting success story not yet finished but one that proves our potential. Thanks to Nobby Clark and Kathy Millatt for their hard work on this one. A new Region does not happen often, and the European Region will hold its first convention this October, and recently elected officers and a Board.

I am disappointed the Member Discount Program (MDP) is essentially a nonstarter. I feel this is Priority One to grow our numbers. The hobby is shrinking, which in many ways is beyond our control. We are at 18,500 members and slowly falling. Value for dollars becomes crucial. A member discount program from Avis to Home Depot to Loews to United Air gets folks interested in joining. I continue to seek out volunteers who believe in this program, and it will be done.

Finishing the move of the Kalmbach Library and completion of the Gallery Exhibit are a large part of my immediate focus, as is getting 501c 3 status for the HD Museum corporation.

Frank Koch and Mike Brestel have lightened my load by assuming a lot of responsibility for the day-to-day administration. Jenny and her staff ensure a level of service and professionalism that make the NMRA outstanding as an organization. They have my support and undying thanks.

This month, my wife Margaret and I embark on a personal visit to Asia. I hope to meet with interested parties at their request in Singapore and Beijing about NMRA affiliation.

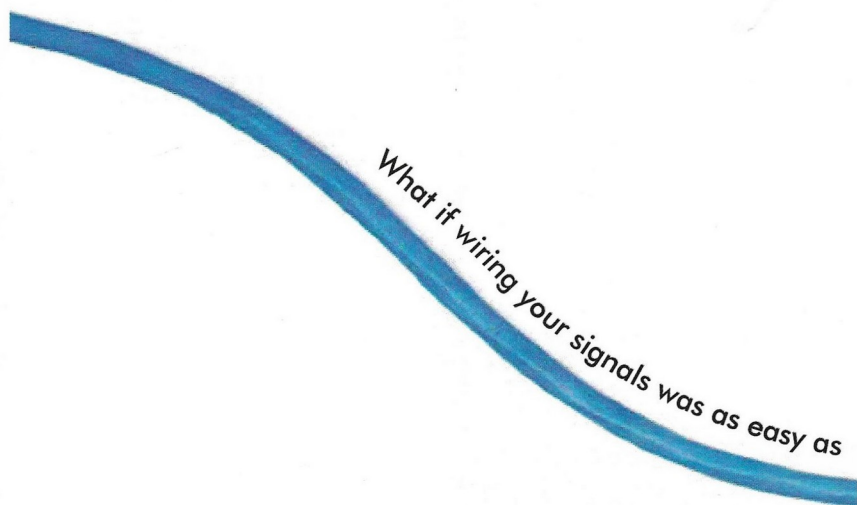
NMRA 2019 has been a great effort. A planning process somewhat foreign to the NMRA, it involves highly technical and professional planning implementation requirements, which were well intentioned, but have proven impractical or counterproductive. The BOD adopted the plan, but the implementation committee — made up of BOD members — in essence suggests a reexamination of the assumptions and tasks in carrying out that plan. Many goals are left over from previous long-range plans (LRPs) are acceptable; some are even completed. I have received few complaints about the goals adopted. However, the process/implementation steps or timetables may have unintentionally created confusion. It is appropriate for the BOD to reexamine this plan, where we are, and where we go, especially in light of the lack of fungible volunteers noted above.

Member retention and recruitment is also a program I wish to undertake in a far more organized manner than historically. Using the EduTrain program as an example, I hope to announce a solid, talented committee of volunteers, who can develop a national model of Recommended Practices to both recruit and retain members. Regions and Divisions can adopt and implement these programs to augment their efforts.

Conclusion. In closing, we have accomplished much, but much remains for us to do. We have a great crew in place working very hard for us and for our hobby. While a lot remains to be done, look at what we have done together since July 2012, when I assumed office. We have a good crew in place and a rosy future ahead.

A final note: We occasionally receive complaints about Region and Division websites woefully out of date. Even our NMRA.org website can have old information on occasion. We are a volunteer organization, and that can hamper our desire to be as current as we would like to be. If you run across such a site, before complaining, can you help out?

Well, those are my thoughts — what are yours?





## 2015 June Dave Connery earned Master Model Railroader 541.

### 2015 July President's Column

#### Election Results and Opportunities

**W**e published the election results previously, but this is my first opportunity to thank all of you who took the time to vote. The NMRA is only as strong as its members, and member involvement is crucial to a healthy NMRA. Only about 10 percent of our members vote and that has been true historically. I can only assume the remaining 90 percent of you are satisfied with the direction taken. If not, well, you had your chance! Actually, you always have a voice and an opportunity to share your opinions with us. Interestingly, only about 10 percent of the membership attends the National Convention. Boy, that 10 percent sure is busy!

Congratulations to the winners and thanks to all who ran. As I said, member involvement is essential to a strong association, and nothing is more selfless than taking time from a fun hobby to help others enjoy it even more. Volunteers make the NMRA work at all levels, and those efforts are deeply appreciated. With the election behind us but another looming for next year, is this not a good time to reflect on what you might do to help your Association and hobby? Truly, what you give is what you receive tenfold. I can assure you, I have gotten back more satisfaction than I ever expected in my years of volunteering. For example, shortly, I will report on some very exciting possibilities stemming from a private 46-day tour of Asia that Margaret and I completed in April. From Singapore to Beijing, there is model railroading as a new and growing hobby in places that have never known hobbies before! Stay tuned.

A special thanks to our Lead Director, Jack Hamilton, MMR, for providing choice in the Presidential race. Far from a sacrificial lamb, Jack did pretty darned well and continues to be a valued member of the Board of Directors. We have a strong leadership team in place, and on the Regional level, some great leaders await their chance on the National scene, but there is always room for more.



#### President's Car

NMRA President Charlie Getz

When first elected, three years ago, I wrote my first column entitled "Who is that Guy?" outlining my goals. I am happy to report that most of those objectives have been achieved; however, a few remain. Indeed, I ran for a second, and last, term to fulfill those remaining promises. Allow me to share with you the goals remaining and the work we together will do over the next three years.

First and foremost is completing the Gallery Exhibit. This exhibit at the California State Railroad Museum (CSRM) is named after the "Gallery," where it will be located. After 18 months of inaction by CSRM for reasons wholly unrelated to the NMRA, I am happy to report things are once again progressing. Entitled "The Magic of Scale Model Railroading," this world-class exhibit will introduce more than 600,000 annual visitors to the fascinating hobby we enjoy. It will highlight all scales and complement the museum's Sefton Toy Train exhibit, which focuses on tinplate. We remain very excited about the possibilities of this exhibit as an introduction to our hobby and the opportunities it presents. The Gallery Exhibit is not the NMRA Model Railroad Museum, but it is a first step.

Similarly, the move of the Kalmbach Memorial Library to the CSRM awaits the priority of the Gallery Exhibit. I expect to complete that as well. At no extra charge, we will offer our members not only the traditional access to our fine library, but also access to one of the largest railroad libraries in the world and the largest west

of the Mississippi. This is an exciting development and opportunity.

The Executive Handbook (EHB) over the years has become a mishmash of policies, procedures, and "regulations" conflated by many to resemble a code of model railroad law instead of its original purpose. Again, I am happy to report great strides have been made in reorganizing and redrafting this EHB into a more usable product. Most of it is actually "corporate," with nothing of interest to the POM ("Plain Ole Member," as the legendary Whit Towers used to refer to members). However, the EHB contains valuable policies and procedures for the contest or conventions or Achievement Program that are of interest to the POM. Therefore, we will split the EHB into a "Corporate" side and a "Program" side. All of it will continue to be public, but you will no longer have to search through pages and pages to locate needed information. A first draft should be available at the annual BOD meeting this August.

Manufacturer self-certification and enhanced use of the "football" conformance warrant are crucial to reestablishing the NMRA as model railroading's leading consumer protection organization. As with the UL listings for electrical products, conformance to applicable NMRA Standards should be a benchmark in any purchasing decision. Why would you not insist a product conform before buying it? Why have standards if not followed? Use of the self-certification and conformance logos will be promoted as a valid market-



## 2015 July President's Column Cont.

ing tool as are UL listings and Consumer Reports endorsements. We see this as a true win-win and service to the hobby.

New technologies continue to present new opportunities. From LCC or Layout Command Control to POB or “Power on Board,” developments in Silicon Valley where I live resonate in model railroading, and we have a role to play. Did you see the May 2015 article on radio-controlled battery-operated locomotives in *Model Railroader* magazine? Yep, that is POB, and it is coming — another fabulous opportunity! I found it interesting, but not surprising those interviewed all swore they would never go back to traditional wired layouts after trying POB. I look forward to the day when a DCC sound-equipped POB locomotive is available RTR. That day will come, and we will have standards in place when it does.

Growing the hobby remains our number one challenge, but also presents another opportunity. As you will learn from the results of my Asia trip, the hobby ironically is doing quite well in Europe and Asia with a younger demographic. The potential is huge, but the challenge is great. I will devote an article to this topic soon. Member discounts is the final area I hope to jump-start. We all look for value when selling the NMRA to non-members. Imagine discounts on desired products and services that equal or exceed your membership cost. Many associations such as AARP offer such benefits; we can also. It does not happen automatically. I will continue to work on this in my last term.

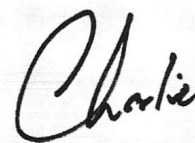
Finally, I will continue to attend at least two Regional and, of course, the National Convention each year. My door is always open, and I try to answer each email received. Your thoughts, opinions, and concerns are always welcome. We may not always agree, but we can always talk. As I requested in column No. 1, please be civil and remember: as important as it is, it is just a hobby after all. So, let's not get crazy. Heck, the public already thinks we are for “playing with trains.” The dirty little secret is that they are correct. We are crazy about

trains; so much so, we want to share our “craziness” with the world. That is the role of the NMRA. Great opportunities await.

Portland Daylight Express 2015 and the National NMRA Convention are coming next month! Have you registered yet? This is shaping up to be a monster event and *the best* venue to improve your modeling skills and knowledge. The Pacific Northwest is lovely in August and should even be sunny. Come and be inspired by some truly memorable layouts, great hobby shops, prototype sites of interest, and first-class clinics on various subjects. Come harass me at Wednesday's “Meet the President/General Membership meeting” or the first Sunday's informal Board of Directors event. There will also be a slate of clinics on “LCC” as I discussed recently, so join me to learn all about this new and exciting technology. The SIG rooms, silent auction, contest room, and so much more make for an action-packed week of activities. It is almost impossible to be bored at a National Convention. At the end of a week of “Model Railroading University 101” is the National Train Show — one of the biggest trains shows in the United States. Attendees get the entire show to themselves Friday morning, and this private access time is my favorite part of the whole week. Capping off a wonderful week will be the annual banquet with awards and speakers. Please do not miss this premier model railroad event. I hope to see you there.

Sad news occurred some months back with the passing of former NMRA President and all around good guy Bob Dupont. Bob may not be a familiar name, but he did much good for the NMRA and was local to where my wife and I live. Bob ran a great hobby shop and was a very skilled modeler in HO and later in O scale. His Tall Pines layout inspired many, and I am proud to own a locomotive and caboose lettered for his road. Rest in peace good friend.

Well, those are my thoughts — what are yours?



**2015**

**July Howard Goodwin earned Master Model Railroader 556.**

**Tom Griffiths earned Master Model Railroader 557.**

**2015 August**

**Jim Younkens earned Master Model Railroader 488.**

**2015 September**

## Get Organized

I've been known to linger at office supply stores longer than most shoppers, getting caught up in all the latest tools, containers, and furniture that promise to help you have a proper place for everything. I try to visualize all my stray pieces of paper, parts, pens, and myriad other loose items when searching for the perfect gadget to contain it all. (I have yet to find it.)

I wouldn't consider myself disorganized, but my desk sometimes suggests otherwise. Some come to my desk and quickly give up hope of ever finding what they need. However, when they ask me for something, 99 percent of the time I can go right to it — much to their amazement.

Unfortunately, my tendency toward untidiness has cost me. Have you ever been to a train show, saw something that you had to have because it would be perfect for (fill in the blank), only to come home and discover that you've already purchased *two* of those items? Yeah, I really need to complete that project, so I don't look for and find that perfect part *again*.

My analysis paralysis when it comes to conquering clutter isn't limited to my desk. When I begin modeling projects, searching for that "perfect" part can sometimes bog me down. Sometimes the mere thought of all the time it will take to get everything together only to have to put it away again can dissuade me from even starting. I think to myself, "I'll tackle that when I have more time." The thing is, I never have more time.

Planning and organizing can go a long way toward maintaining momentum for completing large projects. Anticipating

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needs ahead of time minimizes the possibility of postponing a task — sometimes indefinitely — until the needed part becomes available. However, planning and organizing can, for some, become the *only* hobby one practices. Sometimes it's better to just dive in and start a project to keep yourself motivated. For me, seeing progress spurs me on to complete the job.

As this edition of *NMRA MAGAZINE* goes to press, I am preparing for the National Convention in Portland, Oregon. Since I will be serving several different roles while there, I must get organized prior to the trip. My many hats include editor, reporter, clinic observer, volunteer, shopper, tourist, and, best of all, modeler. I'll be Modeling with the Masters, attending the BOD meeting, photographing award-winning models, touring layouts, getting reacquainted with old friends, bidding at the silent auction, and shopping at the National Train Show — all while prepping another edition of the magazine during my "off" hours. While at Portland, I won't have time to search for this or that, and I don't want to waste time and possibly miss opportunities to meet with other modelers. Therefore, I have put much effort into preparing for this trip.

Whether you're building a large model railroad or a small structure for a contest, organization can keep your projects going, on time, every time.

Remember, organizing need not be perfect; "good enough" really is.



**Bruce De Young earned Master Model Railroader 555.**



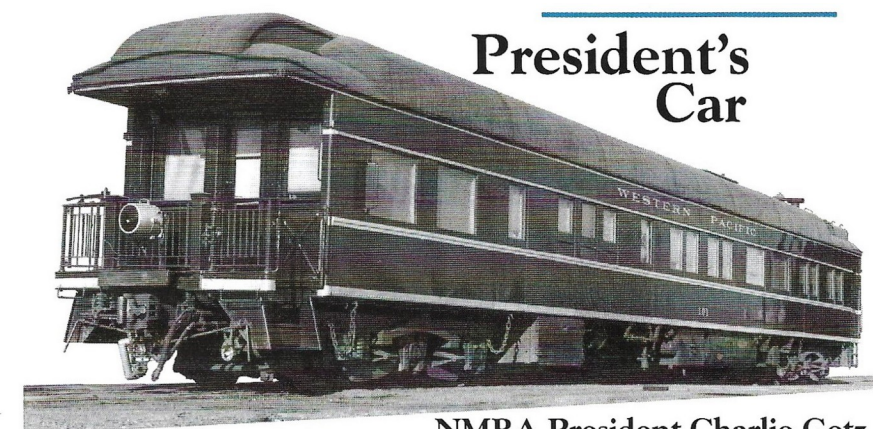
## 2015 September President's Column

1984

No, I am not referring to George Orwell's seminal novel of the same name, and rest easy — I am not about to inject partisan politics into the NMRA! This is a reference to the year in which *Model Railroader Magazine* ("MR") celebrated its 50th anniversary — a year before the NMRA's similar celebration. Looking back at that time and that era, it is increasingly clear that the 1980s may have been the high point in model railroading, at least in North America. As I have mentioned in past columns, this wonderful and vibrant hobby of ours is thriving in Europe, Asia, and Australia/New Zealand. We hope to explore why the hobby seems to do better overseas than in North America. Perhaps we can learn lessons useful for this part of the world.

MR's January 1984 issue — its 50th anniversary issue — contained 268 pages (100 more than the average 1984 issue of 164 pages) and compared to the a recent issue of MR with 86 pages, one can see the change since 1984. The hobby shop directory listings in 1984 were replete with hundreds of retail outlets, whereas the most recent MR listed but a fraction of those. MR's circulation in 1981 was 185,876 — far in excess of 2014, which reported 119,827. MR estimated some 226,000 serious model railroaders in the U.S. in 1984 with 250,000 in 1981 based on annual surveys the magazine conducted back then. Though somewhat controversial, the NMRA once claimed 28,000 members. Many believe the true number was between 24,000 and 26,000 members. Our current level of 18,500 is truly a dramatic change from those earlier numbers.

I found the January 1984 MR instructive in another way. That issue reported on a forum on the future of the hobby with such notables as Editor Russ Larson, Bruce Chubb, John Armstrong, Bruce Walther, Allen Keller, Keith Gutierrez, and Malcolm Furlow among others. As one panel member noted, prognostication is an "iffy" proposition at best, and the panels did not do as well as they hoped with their predictions. Few envisioned



President's  
Car

NMRA President Charlie Getz

DCC though it was on the verge of happening. Some foresaw the importance of computers, but none foresaw the Internet. Yes, predicting the future can be difficult. Interestingly, Russ Larson, then-editor of MR predicted that by 2007, print magazines would be replaced by electronic versions, which has not yet happened.

Of special note was a panelist, John Kunzie, a name I did not recognize, who was concerned about certain trends he spotted in analyzing data from MR's annual surveys taken each year beginning in 1946. From 1950–1974, the average MR reader was 33 years old. No change. By 1979, the age had risen to 37 and by 1984, to 40. Today, our average member age is 63. Our life member's average age is 67. I'll bet the average MR reader today is about 60 or so. More disturbing to Mr. Kunzie was that from 1950–1974, teens were 20 percent of the hobby. In 1979, that had fallen to 12 percent and by 1984, 6.2 percent. What do you suppose the percentage is now? I would guess minus 1 percent.

While some of the other panelists agreed the hobby was aging, none saw an immediate problem. However, one comment was made that were the trend to continue, the hobby indeed might disappear with the Baby Boomer generation. The commenter mentioned if the hobby shrunk past a certain point, critical mass would be reached, resulting in a lack of products and support. Well, the evidence is fairly strong that the trend has continued. However, I do not think the hobby is doomed to disappear. Never has it been

more fulfilling and more interesting than it is today. That 1984 MR issue was replete with products, but today's line up of products is vastly superior to those of the past. And before you decry the high prices of those new products, Mr. Kunzie disabused the 1984 audience of the same claim. He noted that he bought a Varney boxcar kit in 1948 for \$1.90. In 1967 dollars, that same kit would have cost \$3.80, and by inflationary 1984, \$12! Yet, an Athearn boxcar kit cost \$3.95 then. Today, I can buy a ready-to-run boxcar with exquisite detail for around \$25 but adjusted for inflation, that is not much more than that 1984 Athearn boxcar kit would be today. I do not believe scale trains are disproportionately expensive in an era of \$4/gallon gasoline.

From this data, one can somewhat extrapolate that the hobby is shrinking. In mentioning these facts, I do not intend to depress you nor suggest all is lost. Far from it! Unless we admit the facts and concentrate on where they lead us, we cannot formulate an effort to reverse this trend or even know if there is a trend. Some would argue these stats are meaningless; that the hobby is thriving today. Circulation is down because on-line magazines and resources have replaced the need for a print magazine. Hobby shops have closed because one can buy what they need on the Internet. Our membership numbers are down because modelers do not find us relevant or need the NMRA in a changing world. I acknowledge a grain of truth in each of these pronouncements; however,

## 2015 September President's Column Cont.

I challenge anyone asserting these points to cite hard evidence to substantiate their claims. The numbers I provided are just that: hard evidence. The contrary arguments to those facts remain theories without evidence.

I doubt *MR's* shrinking readership and the loss of so many train shops merely reflect changing trends in communication and commerce. Sure, I read and enjoy the digital model railroad magazines. Kalmbach has also branched into the digital age, as have other publishers. We would love to produce a digital *NMRA MAGAZINE*, but it just does not pencil out yet. Indeed, it is the difficulty of coming up with a successful and profitable Internet model that makes digital publishing difficult. *Model Railroad Hobbyist* is a leading digital magazine promising 200 pages per issue. I enjoy looking at it each month, but unlike print magazines, it is free and not subject to audit as to its circulation. The number of "hits" is measured as the number of readers, but this may not be true. Imagine that if every time a newsstand customer thumbed through a copy of *MR* counted as a reader. It does not. Well, the Internet does not yet have a reliable measure of its true impact. For this reason, some manufacturers are reluctant to pay for ads in digital magazines. After all, how does a publisher set ad rates without audited and verifiable circulation numbers?

Similarly, the Internet has revolutionized the buying and selling of model railroad equipment, and again, yours truly has found some treasures on eBay and ordered products not obtainable in my local shop. However, I have never ordered paint or stripwood online. I have never been able to test-run an engine online. It is pretty difficult to order one pair of Kadee couplers. I proudly support the few shops left in the Bay Area but also recognize the advantage of responsible Internet use for model railroad equipment. Responsible for me does not mean examining the latest locomotive release at my local shop and then hurrying home to order it on-line to save a buck.

So we either have a massive number of scale model railroaders hiding in plain sight, getting all they need from the Internet, or we have a trend that suggests a continuing aging of the hobby that may continue until we reach that critical mass predicted back in 1984. The BOD is hard at work planning to avoid this to the extent any of us has control over popular trends. One pathway is the reinvigorated Gallery Exhibit at the California State Railroad Museum — back on track — which we hope to present in 2016. Some 600,000 visitors a year will be exposed to the best in scale model railroading. Another initiative is to go fishing where the fish are. Not the mythical teen, though we would love 20 percent of our numbers to be teens. Rather, we want those fellow boomers with disposable income, time, and an interest in doing something productive during retirement.

Perhaps the upcoming younger generations will rediscover the simple joys of creating something beautiful with their hands, not with electronic devices. Until then, chasing after those with little interest in what we have to offer seems counterproductive. However, I am not prepared to write off the younger generations. Unlike past generations, who migrated to our hobby out of self-interest, we must actively cultivate those youngsters and often, it is a labor-intensive effort. It is one dependent upon individual initiative, and many of the anecdotal stories I receive substantiate that theory. I have tried to encourage three younger modelers. All were initially enthusiastic. One has discovered girls and wandered off to other pursuits, but two are hanging in there. Well, even if all three discover other interests, the seed has been planted, so keep your fingers crossed. That is all we can do.

Our hobby is rich with self-fulfillment possibilities and satisfaction. We need to share what we do more effectively, and the NMRA always welcomes your ideas on how to do so. We must all be ambassadors of Model Railroading 24/7 but also remember the lessons of 1984. Just



## 2015 September President's Column Cont.

as George Orwell's "1984" has not come to pass, so I hope the prophetic concerns of 1984's John Kunzie do not either. Our fate is in our hands, and we can be masters of that fate. What are you doing and what together can we all do?

Please do not forget our new initiative to create a Layout Directory of members willing to allow other NMRA member visitors to see their work at a mutually agreeable time. Bob Chaparro is heading that effort, so look for the announcement and consider adding your name to the list. As always, we will treat your contact information with the utmost care. This member benefit returns us

to a time when a Member Directory was the easiest way to contact other members when traveling. That is how a very young Charlie Getz contacted John Allen to arrange for a visit to the Gorre & Daphetid. That visit changed my life.

Portland and the National NMRA Convention are just behind us, but because this is written well in advance of the convention, I cannot comment on how it went. I hope you were able to attend, and I hope you had a great time. I always enjoy the National Convention as a time to reconnect, recharge the modeling batteries, and recover the enthusiasm to get back

to a brand-new modeling season as summer fades and winter approaches. In sunny California, we tend to have less concern about winter's fury, but we also miss out on those wonderful basements! In the next issue, I hope to report on Portland and the BOD meeting along with any other news of interest.

Until then, those are my thoughts; what are yours?



## 2015 October

## THREE STIKES POLICY

### Common sense talk about the three strikes policy: What is it and what does it mean?

OCT 2015 Mike Brestel, NMRA Insurance Coordinator, At-Large Worldwide Director

**W**e've been getting a lot of questions about the Visitor Policy that the NMRA Board reaffirmed and publicized in February of this year, limiting visitors to NMRA meetings to three visits during their lifetime.

This isn't really a new policy, since it was first adopted in 2007 and explained in the "President's Car" column in the November 2007 issue of *SCALE RAILS* (now called the *NMRA MAGAZINE*). Then, as now, the needs of our insurance provider played a large part in the adoption of this policy, but there are also issues of basic fairness, as well as tax issues in the United States.

**Here's the policy:** Visitors are allowed three visits to an NMRA meeting *in their lifetime*. If they don't join by their third visit, they cannot attend any more meetings.

A lot of the questions we've been getting are from members trying to over-think the policy, worrying about this or that exception and making up complicated "what-ifs." The policy does not apply to members' spouses who come along to the meetings so that they can go to dinner afterwards. It does not apply to non-member caregivers who aren't modelers, but who provide a ride to a member who cannot drive himself. It does not apply to events that are organized for the general public, like mall shows, swap meets, beginner

clinic series, and the like, nor does it apply to things like joint meetings with another non-NMRA group or to family picnics or outings.

The policy does apply to non-members who continually show up at meetings and make themselves at home, month after month, year after year. Allowing freeloaders to participate as if they were members is unfair because it takes advantage of our members who *have* paid up. We members are all paying to keep the organization going — what are the freeloaders doing, besides getting a free ride on our backs? Tolerating permanent freeloaders can give our insurance providers a reason to cancel an NMRA group's coverage if there's an incident, leaving individual officers and members responsible for paying the claim. The IRS has rules about giving benefits of membership to non-members, too — they say don't do it, and there are tax consequences if you do.

Now, if your Division and Region are already following the rules (which would be a really good idea if you want the protection of our NMRA Liability Insurance policy), this policy is not the big deal you might think it is. We all know that if someone comes and tries us out three times and still doesn't join, he or she is not going to join. So after the third turn-down, don't worry about it — just move on to the next prospect.

If you're still wondering whether your group is in compliance, just ask yourself: are you allowing people who aren't members to come to your meetings month after month, year after year, and participate as if they'd paid their dues? If the answer is no, then fine, just keep doing what you're doing. If the answer is yes, then you have some changes to make.

If you have additional questions about this policy or how to implement it, please feel free to contact an NMRA officer, director, or NMRA Headquarters. We'll get your question to the right person.

Mike Brestel  
NMRA Insurance Coordinator  
At-Large Worldwide Director

*Thank you for putting this explanation in the info blast and on the web. I don't think you could have hit the nail on the head any harder. Personally, I don't know why people can't understand this. There are people in this hobby who have to struggle to get the funds together to pay their dues, but they do it. Why on earth should a freeloader get the same benefits that this member, who struggles to stay current on dues, pays for? I can't figure why some people just can't grasp that.*

*Thanks again.  
Paul Mangan  
President, Midwest Region / NMRA*

**2015 October**

**Thomas Oxnard, MD, earned Master ModelRailroader 565.**

**2015 November Bob Keune Passed Away in Sept. Bob was an 80 year Member!**

**NMRA Member Bob Keune (left) passed away a few months ago. A Milwaukee resident and WWII Vet., Bob was the last living Charter Member of the NMRA, joining in 1935 when he was 16 and lived to be 96. (President Mike Brestel on right below)**



**2015 November**

## **2015 AWARDS and HONORS**

### **PIONEER AWARD**

**E**ach year, the National Model Railroad Association presents one or more Pioneer of Model Railroading Awards to individuals who established “an impeccable record of integrity and respect as well as a history of service to the model railroad industry.” Awardees must have played a prominent role in promoting our hobby, developed a unique manufacturing process that significantly impacted the industry, or innovated in product marketing or development.

Times change, our hobby changes, those who help set scale model railroading on its course as the World’s Greatest Hobby make their mark and perhaps fade from memory. Our goal here is to ensure that we don’t forget those who made the hobby what it is today: a pastime that offers so much enjoyment to so many.

### **Avery “Swede” Norlen**

For 2015, it is my honor as chair of the Pioneer Award committee, with fellow committee members Allen Pollock, Mike

Brestel, and Dave Thornton, to cite the work of Avery “Swede” Norlen of Tomalco.

I have previously observed that the model railroad hobby could have survived quite nicely had we been restricted to two scales: TT (halfway between HO and N) and S (halfway between O and HO). That’s not how the storyline played out, but under the Tomalco banner, Swede Norlen certainly did more than his share to supply S and Sn3 modelers with key components, notably track. Tomalco was founded by Tom A. Lindholm in the 1940s. Swede became the sole owner of Tomalco around 1964.



Swede is generally considered the father of Sn3, which is an ideal scale for narrow-gauge modeling. He imported the first locomotives in conjunction with Pacific Fast Mail. Sn3 authority Peter Smith recalls that they were Rio Grande C-16s in both Sn3 and Sn42 (or Sn3½); the latter would run on HO track. Pete purchased the Tomalco line from Swede in the early 1990s; Bill Peter of PBL markets the Sn3 track. Swede produced a line of HO, S, and O scale narrow-gauge car kits and a line of brass investment castings for cars and locomotives plus the all-important S and Sn3 track.

The NMRA is delighted and honored to recognize the late Avery Norlen as a Pioneer of Model Railroading.

### Eberhard and Wolfgang Richter

Our next honorees for 2015 are two brothers who have done more than anyone else to confuse the terminology we use for large-scale model railroading. At the same time, they resurrected a previously popular track gauge.

Model railroad gauges and scales were once numbered: aught or zero, one, two, and so on. A printed aught standing alone looks a bit odd, so it became O scale. A scale about half that size became HO. The next larger scale was No. 1, with a 45mm track gauge.

Eberhard and Wolfgang Richter of Lehmann Garten Bahn, or LGB, explored the O scale market, decided it was already saturated, and instead looked to No. 1 scale's 45mm track. They used No. 1 scale's 45mm track gauge but treated that as meter gauge, resulting in large-scale, narrow-gauge models of 1:22.5 proportion. What they called G gauge became very popular with garden railway enthusiasts, as the equipment was far too heavy for the squirrels and mosquitoes to carry off.

Then, they decided to produce some U.S. prototype narrow-gauge equipment, and this started a rash of confusing terminology that we haven't resolved to this day. Our stuff doesn't run on meter gauge but rather on slightly narrower 36-inch gauge. So, if we use 45mm track for three-foot gauge equipment, the proportion changes to 1:20.3. That's properly called F scale.

Competitors picked up on that gauge/scale discrepancy, but LGB carried on with G gauge. Still other firms decided to join

in the large-scale renaissance but with standard-gauge models running on 45mm track, which brings us back to No. 1 scale and gauge. But two major manufacturers decided the 1:32 models looked too small, so they bulked up their models to 1:29, yet retained the 45mm track gauge.

Despite this headache-inducing terminology and mathematical gobbledegook, we can't deny that the Richter brothers started a revolution that continues to this day. The NMRA is therefore delighted and honored to recognize them as Pioneers of Model Railroading.

### Bill Wischer

The last Pioneer Award for 2015 is especially meaningful to me personally. Back in 1961, I became one of the inmates at Purdue University and, stumbling along in the footsteps of track-planning guru John Armstrong, joined the Purdue Model Railroad Club. Over the years, I met a number of fellow inmates who became lifelong friends. Among them was Bill Wischer.

Bill's parents were champion model airplane builders and fliers, but they also had an interest in railroading. They were friends with Bill Walthers, and I'm sure that influenced Bill Wischer's choice of career at Wm. K. Walthers, Inc. Bill commented that Walthers hired him because no one else would.

In the 1960s, Bill worked in the warehouse, did purchasing, and then moved to manufacturing as what Phil Walthers dubbed a jack-of-all-trades. "When we started importing European products," Phil noted, "Bill knew nothing about them. But in short order, he was traveling through Europe — by train, of course — and became an expert."

Almost all of us have been directly affected by Bill's accomplishments at Walthers. He has an encyclopedic memory of details relating to all things railroading, both models and full-size. He understands how to lay out tools for the most efficient production.

His knowledge of the company's tooling library has enabled him to figure out modifications that extend the life of the tools while creating new products that would otherwise not be possible. Bill was the key player in the integration of Ulrich, Silver Streak, Train Miniature, and Life-

Like into Walthers' portfolio. Bill started the Cornerstone line; the first kits were Magnuson cast models converted to plastic.

Bill retired to part-time in 2012, but he is still active and contributing, not only to Walthers but also to your and my enjoyment of our hobby.

The NMRA is honored to name Bill Wischer a Pioneer of Model Railroading.

### FELLOW OF THE NMRA

The Fellow of The NMRA Award may be granted to those individuals in the NMRA who have fostered the organization and the hobby and have increased an advanced social interaction and the social benefits of the hobby.

### Gerry Hopkins

Gerry is a pillar of the Australasian Region and of the NMRA itself. For at least 30 years, he has worked tirelessly for the Hobby and more particularly for the NMRA.

Gerry is a very well-known modeler throughout Australia and New Zealand and is a devoted supporter in every way. He has attended countless model railroad exhibitions throughout Australia over the years and has exhibited his own narrow gauge and standard gauge portable layouts. He has an outgoing personality, and through his efforts has attracted many, many people to the hobby and the NMRA.

Over the years, Gerry has held many roles for the NMRA. He has served the AP Chair for Australasia Region and as Deputy Chair to Frank Koch, MMR for AR. He encourages members to participate in the Achievement Program, and he has probably managed the progression to Master Model Railroader of three-quarters of the 22 Master Model Railroaders in the AR.

Gerry has held many executive positions including newsletter editor and web master, Ordinary Member of the Board, AP Chair, and Divisional Super. He is always available to the members on any number of railway and hobby-related matters. His life really does revolve around the NMRA.

### DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD

The Distinguished Service Award may be awarded to those who have, directly or



## 2015 November

## 2015 AWARDS and HONORS Cont.

indirectly, member or non-member, given outstanding service to the hobby.

### Keith Wills

Keith wrote the "Collector Consist" column in *Railroad Model Craftsman*. He is one of the few who chronicled the history of the hobby, and he has been doing it very well for more than 30 years. For his body of work as perhaps the most published historian of the hobby, the Honors Committee felt he fully deserves this DSA. The committee found an interview he did for the old "The Model Railway Show" podcast back in January 2012 (the episode was sponsored by the NMRA, by the way), detailing his fascination and love of the early trains after visiting the Train Collectors Association museum in Strasburg, Pennsylvania.

### HONORARY LIFE MEMBER

Honorary Life Membership is the highest honor the NMRA can bestow upon one of its present or past members. It shall be given only in recognition of

outstanding elective or voluntary service to the NMRA.

### Al Boos

In the spring 2014, Al Boos stepped down as AP Chairman in the Lone Star Region after about 16 years of service. Al proved himself as an extremely valuable source of information for many members in the region. He always made time to answer all questions and provide needed guidance and encouragement to those working on certificates. Al always gave a 100 percent effort to support the NMRA in everything he did as Region AP Chairman. He was a mentor to many members working on their MMRs. Many of the members who earned certificates owe a debt of gratitude to Al for his assistance. Al continues to be active in the Lone Star Region and is a strong proponent of the Achievement Program.

### Ken West

Ken has been the decoder tester since the inception of DCC. He worked with

Brian Barnt, Stan Ames, and several manufacturers to design a testing program for decoders. He also wrote the computer program that does this testing. The only thing that got in his way was his health. He had a severe viral infection that confined him to his bed and unable to walk ten steps before being completely exhausted. This went on for several years. Now that he has regulated his medicines, Ken has resumed his duties as the decoder baseline tester.

The NMRA now accepts

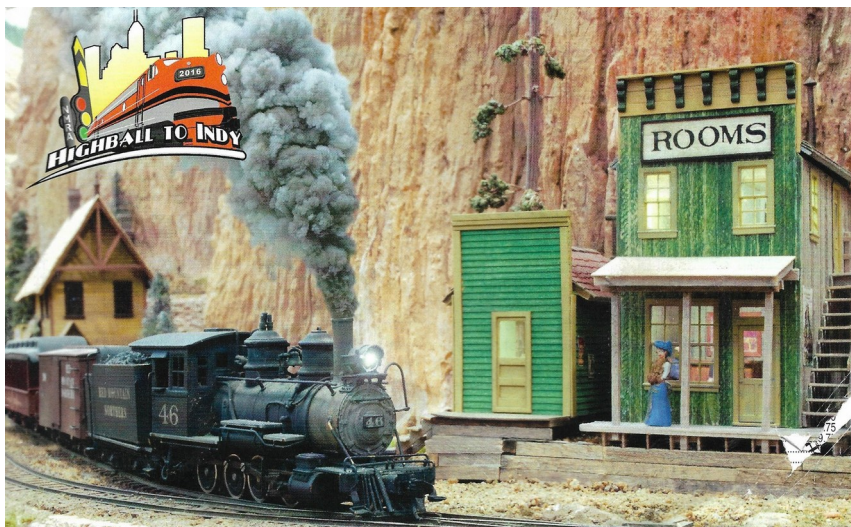
**PayPal**<sup>tm</sup>

- Renewals
- Memberships
- Books
- Donations
- Online store
- EVERYTHING!

## 2015 December

**Gordon H. Geiger earned Master Model Railroader 569.**

## 2016 January





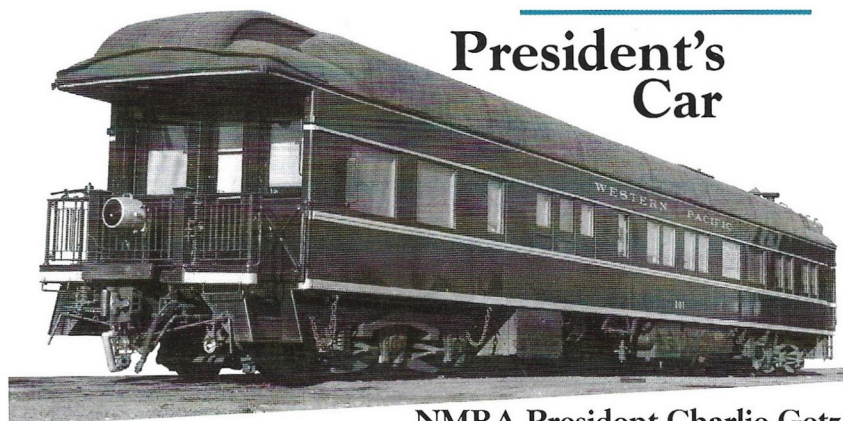
### A New Year of Modeling

I want to wish you a Happy New Year, with the promise of an exciting New Year of Model Railroading in 2016. Regardless of what scale you model, this is the perfect time of year to recommit yourself to this wonderful hobby of ours. Call it a New Year's resolution. Now this is a resolution I can keep!

In the previous column, I discussed the British Region's 70th anniversary convention held at the LMS Railway School of Transport in Derby, England. I would like to expand a bit on their convention and activities since we rarely have the opportunity to examine the many positive actions of our overseas regions. For better or worse, many view the NMRA as essentially an "American" organization. That is a mistake. The hobby is truly universal with worldwide appeal. The NMRA is proudly an international organization, with NMRA Canada, the British, Australasian, and European Regions. We at the NMRA value our overseas members. Often, they do not have access to all the programs and advantages we have in North America. So for them, being a member is a true vote of confidence in what we do and stand for. I am very proud of them and the NMRA for being such a fine international organization. And, as you will see by the end of this column, positive developments in Europe and Asia reinforce the important role of the NMRA in the worldwide hobby we all enjoy.

In December, I thanked those who made Lead Director Pete Magoun and me feel so welcome in the UK, including BR President Mike Arnold, Atlantic Director Kathy Millatt, MMR, member Mike Hughes, and member Mick Moignard, among others. I should have added Steve Dennison to that list and, frankly, every BR member we met. A nicer group of folks you will never meet, and those BBC accents made it very civilized!

What an interesting experience to see how North American railroading is presented overseas, as well as how the BR seeks to attract new members and expand the hobby. Due in large part to the efforts



### President's Car

#### NMRA President Charlie Getz

of Mike Hughes and with the support of the BR BOD, the British Region has adopted a Marketing Strategy for 2015 along with a Manual to guide those exhibiting at Train Shows. I'll be sharing these ideas with our BOD and marketing folks. Their slogan is "sharing know-how," and they do both at their conventions with lecture hall clinics and at train shows. If you think model railroading is limited to North America, think again.

Also in December, I mentioned that in 1971, the NMRA for the first and only time held its National Convention in London. Since then, no overseas convention has been held. Why? Having been to Canada, Australia, Europe, and the UK, I must tell you that good modeling is not exclusive to the United States! We are missing the chance to combine a memorable model railroad event with a family vacation to savor. I am thrilled to report that both the BR and AR are considering and working on bids for 2022. Imagine the UK or Sydney Australia for a convention! Imagine the chance to savor top-notch modeling coupled with an exotic location. Imagine meeting friends from overseas you never knew you had and seeing products you never knew existed.

Too expensive you say? A large majority of our members travel and often cruise. I was a public employee for 40 years and am not wealthy by any stretch, but Margaret and I can travel overseas for about the same price as stateside. I returned in mid-November from a month in Europe, for example. It need not be expensive, and, frankly, some places are cheaper

than comparable U.S. cities. I am not bragging, nor insensitive to those of you on tight budgets. Yes, some of you will not be able to attend; however, only 10 percent of our membership attends conventions in the U.S., with many citing cost as a factor. Cost is relative and a topic I will address next month. For some, membership dues are expensive; for others, the latest release is a must-have regardless of cost. So please let me know if you would consider an overseas convention in 2022 or after because I think the time to plan one is now.

I met with my counterpart in Europe at MOROP: Peter Briegel. What is MOROP? Let me quote from their website, as edited by me:

"MOROP is the European federation that groups and heads the different national federations for railroad modelers and railroad friends in Europe. The federation has its head office in Berne (Switzerland) ... MOROP (was) founded in Geneva in 1954, initiated by some railroad die-hards who foresaw, nearly 50 years ago, the necessity to set standards for the production of the different makes of miniature railroad.

"So MOROP's main focus is, since its foundation, the setting of standards of the above mentioned elements under the 'NEM' (European Standards for Modeling) created and produced by the Technical Commission in collaboration with the producers of European made modeling material. Since 1994, close ties have been knit with the NMRA (National Model Railroad Association), which creates the standards for the USA. The standards concerning the digital systems of the



## 2016 January President's Report Cont.

'DCC' type (Digital Control Command) have, by the way, been created in common with the federation of the USA, making the digital standards almost a worldwide standard.

"MOROP consists today of 22 federations spread out in 17 countries of Europe, from north to south, and from east to west, thus making up an European federation of more than 30,000 members. The two official languages of MOROP are French and German, languages in which are published the standards, as well as the official documents of the federation. English is used in contacts with the NMRA and the associations or groups that don't practice the official languages of MOROP."

So, MOROP is a confederation of European associations by area with a looser structure than the NMRA. Like the NMRA, they set standards but are limited to Europe's different and unique needs. I slightly disagree that the NMRA sets only "American" standards — our standards are applied worldwide. The principle that we both set standards is correct. Although mention is made of a relationship with the NMRA, that relationship has frankly been hampered by language because the official languages of MOROP — German and French — leave little room for English. Peter has been a frequent visitor to the U.S. and spent time in England. His English is superb. Younger members of MOROP speak English along with their native tongue and believe English should be the new official language of MOROP. Peter agrees and hopes to change the language, as well as strengthen ties with the NMRA. Thus, we have the opportunity to grow closer to a respected organization that shares many values with us.

Remember from previous columns that I also met this year with representatives of HASEA — a Chinese network of approximately 250,000 model railroaders in China, also seeking closer ties with the NMRA. These outreaches by the NMRA, HASEA, and MOROP are fantastic opportunities for us all to enjoy and expand the hobby. I will report on any new de-

velopments, but 2016 is truly the Year of Model Railroading. Our potential is limited only by our imagination and our resources. Peter also mentioned establishing an "International Day of Model Railroading" in early December each year. Among MOROP, the NMRA, and HASEA, perhaps that dream can become a reality.

MOROP needs our help. Peter Briegel would love to get the NEMS standards, written in German, translated into English. Surely among our members we must have someone proficient in German and English who might volunteer to help the NMRA strengthen ties with MOROP. If you would like to help, please contact me directly, and let's discuss what can be done. You would be making a tremendous contribution to our efforts to reach out to MOROP and to strengthening ties with modelers in Europe.

Rick Shoup passed away last fall. Rick had been in poor health the past few years, but his passing came as a shock. Rick was a stalwart of the NMRA for many years, and his involvement in recruiting and in the AP program was essential to our success. Rick was also a bit of a character and beloved by many. He will be missed.

One last piece of business: A very few objected to our use of the term "freeloader" in referring to those who continuously abuse our three visit policy but never join the NMRA. The term "freeloader" is defined as to "take advantage of the hospitality of others" (American Heritage Dictionary, 2nd College Edition) or "one who makes a practice of eating [or] drinking at the expense of others" (Funk and Wagnalls Standard College Dictionary). So let us examine the "freeloader." By that I mean a person who attends and participates in local NMRA event after event but never joins the NMRA. Often, they are buddies of members and enjoy attending the local events but see no reason to join. So what term do you use to describe someone who takes advantage of the NMRA's hospitality but never pays for it? I call them "freeloaders" and do not apologize



## 2016 January President's Report Cont.

for doing so. If you have a better term, fine. One complaint I receive is that our dues can be a burden for some members on fixed income. So those members sacrifice to join the NMRA. Yet the freeloader takes advantage of the sacrifice of others and sees no problem in letting them bear the cost of his or her fun. You know, I find the attitude of such freeloaders contemptible, but the attitude of

those members who enable the freeloader is mystifying. Why would you pay dues but allow a buddy to avoid doing so? I would love to hear from any of you anonymously why you feel freeloaders is acceptable. If this is okay for the NMRA, why is it not okay for the Boy Scouts or the Elks or the Masons? Well, it is a New Year, and perhaps this problem will not occur anymore. So let us

end with the same wish as at the beginning. Enjoy a great year of model railroading! Go build something, or operate, or just savor our great hobby

Until then, those are my thoughts; what are yours?

Charlie

## 2016 February RECRUITING NEW MEMBERS VIA VIDEO!

If you've ever spent any time trying to recruit new members to the NMRA, you know that there's a lot to tell them about: the activities, the history, the camaraderie. But we've all heard the phrase that "a picture is worth a thousand words," so what if we were able to *show* prospective members the NMRA story?

Now you can, with a 5-minute video that tells the story of our Association and more. Entitled "Get More From Your Hobby," the video is on our website at [www.nmra.org](http://www.nmra.org). It's perfect for use at train shows, home layout tours, swap meets, Rotary meetings...wherever there's anyone who may be interested in model railroading. Best of all, you can download it to your laptop or tablet and carry it with you wherever someone may be interested in model railroading or the NMRA.

The video begins by outlining all the reasons model railroading is such a great hobby, as well as all the things the hobby teaches, including art, carpentry, electricity, model making, and history. It even talks about how this age-old hobby is completely modern by using state-of-the-art electronics. Most important, however, is the fact that the video tells viewers that they can get even more out of the hobby by becoming a member of the NMRA.

The story touches on the many benefits of our organization, with "fellowship," "education," and "fun" being three of the most rewarding and important. And it doesn't forget to show local Division activities — things that could be the most appealing to prospective members.

And of course, the video touches on our National Convention, the National Train Show, and *NMRA MAGAZINE* as being more of the many benefits of NMRA membership.

Our new recruitment video can be viewed at — and

downloaded from — our website at [www.nmra.org](http://www.nmra.org). You'll find a link to view the video on the homepage — look for the large graphic that says "Welcome to Model Railroading." Click on that, and you'll be taken to a page where you can watch.

To download the video, log in to the Members Only website, click on "Promo Materials" (in the red bar at the top of the page), and you'll be taken to a page that says, "Download the NMRA Recruitment Video." Click on that, and the video will be saved to your hard drive. The video is an MP4

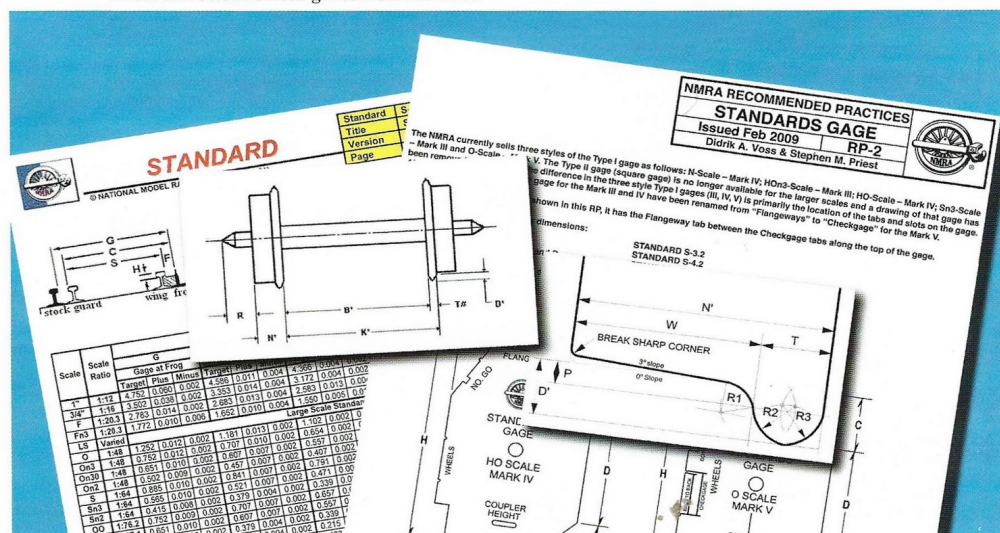
and is about 140 megabytes, so the download should be reasonably fast. Virtually any computer should be able to play it.

The video was produced by NMRA Vice President/Special Projects Gerry Leone, MMR, along with Board member Peter Youngblood, MMR, and Piedmont Division member Norman Lundin. We'd like to thank everyone in the Midwest Region, Thousand Lakes Region, Southeastern Region, and at the Portland National Convention who helped make this video possible.

Get  
more  
from  
your  
hobby



Above and below: screen grabs from the video





**2016 February**

**Vin Gallogly earned Master Model Railroader 549.**

**2016 March Train In' Camps by Peter Youngblood**

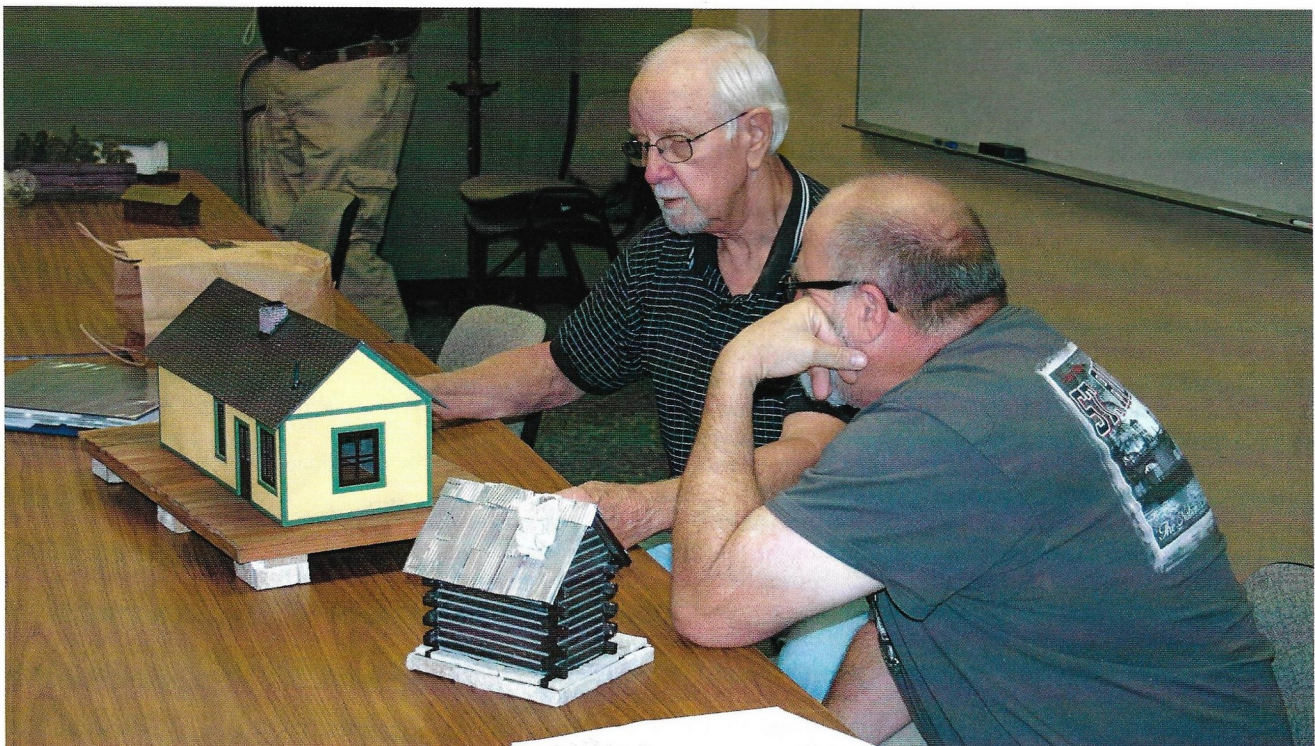
In the SER (Southeastern Region) Piedmont Division, we wondered several years ago if helping our Division's model railroaders develop certain skills would not only benefit them individually, but also encourage overall membership enjoyment and retention — even recruitment. A novice can easily be overwhelmed by what he or she sees in monthly seminar-type clinics given by more advanced modelers, as well as terminology foreign to his or her modeling vocabulary. We decided to create an outreach teaching program, using the self-explanatory "Train In' Camp" play-on-words name. From beginner to the intermediate modeler, this hands-on program has

proven most popular. In keeping with our belief that "reaching out to help someone" is just as neighborly within our hobby as outside of it, the positive impact brought about by these camps has been most gratifying to our participating members, as well as those of us volunteering as camp instructors.

The planned 'Train In' Camp curriculum is primarily determined each year by member requests and relative costs. Topics chosen often include "Basic Layout Design," "Basic Benchwork & Track Laying," "Beginning DCC," or "Basic Scenery." These topics are known to be beginners' favorites, which we intersperse with intermediate modelers requests, i.e.:

"Installing DCC Decoders," "Air Brushing 101," and "Weathering with Pan Pastels." Occasional Camps are dedicated to cover "The Achievement Program" and "Learning to Judge the AP or Division Contests." Members attending the latter topics are encouraged to intern with Division AP evaluators and/or contest judges.

Scheduling dates and location is the responsibility of our Division's Director of Operations in coordination with the Division Superintendent. They also solicit volunteer instructors from Division members, typically MMRs or individuals who possess advanced skills and AP Certificates in one or more of the chosen subjects.





## 2016 March

Camps are held quarterly, usually on a Saturday as a one-day course from 10AM to 3PM, including a one-hour break for lunch. A Division Director (or AP Chairman) handles enrollment, which is typically restricted to 12 to 15 members on a first come, first served sign-up basis. Train In' Camps are advertised on the Division website, in print in the Division's quarterly Timetable, and further promoted by announcements at monthly Division meetings. Classes rarely go unfilled. The relatively small class size is manageable, allowing more detailed instruction by the two or three assigned instructors. Camp workspace is provided free by the local Hobbytown USA — a win-win arrangement for both the Division and the store.

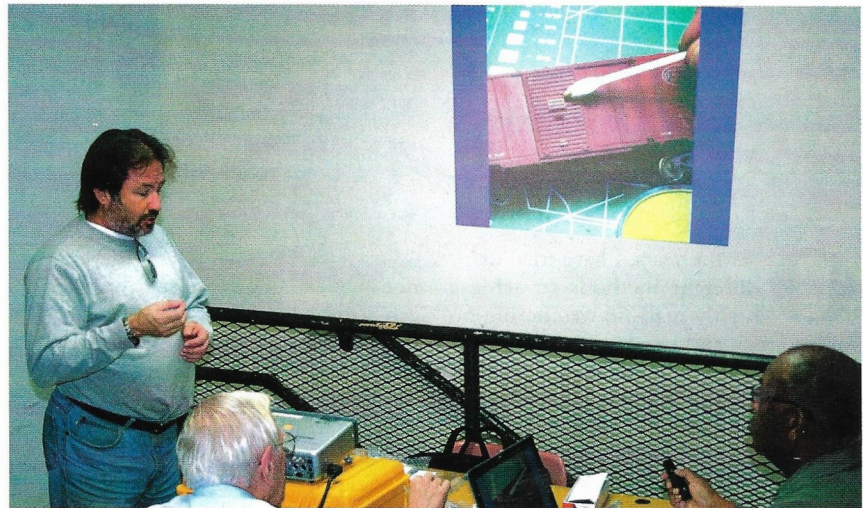
Train In' Camps do not use formal lesson plans. Informal guidelines are sufficient, and "How To..." books may be referenced or shown. In some instances, a PowerPoint presentation is given with handout material provided to illustrate project steps. When model building is involved, an example of the completed model is shown. Members are then guided hands-on from start to finish. A good example is the small, beginner's scenery kit from Woodland Scenics — a complete make-and-take diorama using a cross-section of the company's readily available scenery materials.

Camps are free. Members pay only for the cost of kits or materials provided. When members are required to provide materials for a particular subject, they receive a 10 percent NMRA discount on any purchases made at Hobbytown USA, our host. If tools are required, advance notice is given to bring them (i.e. soldering iron, solder, and so forth). Because the location is free and instructors are member volunteers, individual member expenses are either non-existent or kept to a minimum.

The fun, informality and success of our Train In' Camp sessions reinforce our belief that not only do they provide a venue for learning new skills that achieve intended educational goals, but they also clearly demonstrate a hands-on tangible benefit of NMRA membership.

Train In' Camps provide an excellent opportunity to increase member retention and may even lead to recruitment of new members. Give Train In' Camps a try in your Division, no matter the size. They are proven educational assets and rewarding events that bring about positive results. 📷

## Train In' Camps Cont.





## 2016 March

**Paul Chandler earned Master Model Railroader 570.**

**Minton Dings earned Master Model Railroader 572.**

## 2016 April

## Editor Cinthia Priest Column

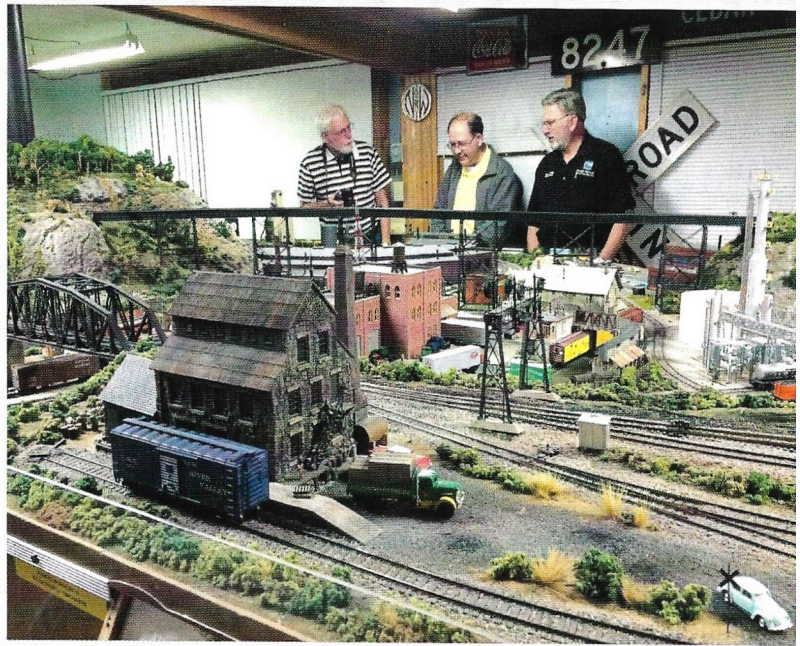
**E**ach February, the NMRA Board of Directors holds its mid-year meeting. This year, we met in Atlanta, Georgia. At the meeting's conclusion, Tom Brennison, MMR, gave us a tour of his layout.

Tom started this layout in 1989 with the intention to have but one operator. During the mid-1990s, he expanded the 18x12-foot island-type layout to 18x26 feet, using a double-bend dog bone basic track configuration.

Tom handlaid the majority of his trackwork. Trains roll through mountainous terrain and by numerous scratchbuilt structures. His operational signals are also mostly scratchbuilt. Walking around the layout, it is easy to see why Tom earned several AP Certificates. Tom obtained all but one of these certificates on December 1, 2015, because the layout and all its accouterments had been completed for some time — it was just a matter of putting the paperwork in order. (You can read more about Tom's journey in this month's MMR earned on page 54.)

How about you? Do you have an MMR just waiting on paperwork? It's really not that bad — see this month's Division Business Car for more words of wisdom on this exclusive member benefit.

### NMRA Magazine Editor Cinthia Priest



*Above: Three Master Model Railroaders admire the handiwork of Tom Brennison — one of the NMRA's newest MMRs. Tom's layout was on tour in Atlanta, Georgia, after the mid-year Board of Directors meeting. (From left to right) Canadian Director Fred Headon, MMR; Discount Program Coordinator Bob Weinheimer, MMR; and Standards and Conformance Department Manager Didrik Voss, MMR. — Cinthia Priest photo*

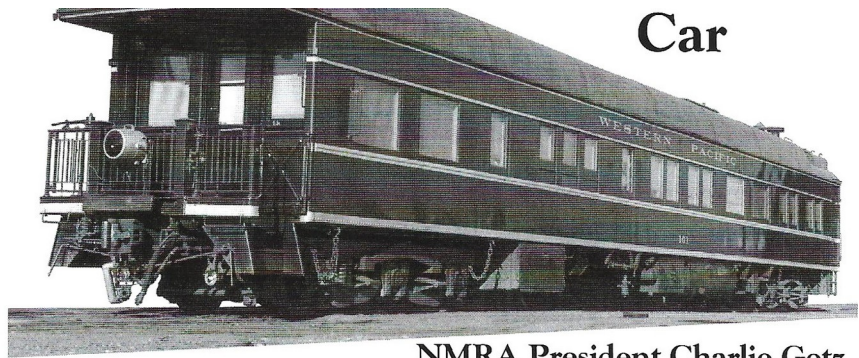


## 2016 April President's Column

**A**s I write this editorial, I have literally just returned from our annual Mid-Year Board of Director's meeting this year held in Atlanta, Georgia. Editor Cinthia Priest allowed me to push back our deadlines so as to report some of the highlights. Thank you, Cinthia. I understand Atlantic Director Kathy Millatt will be reporting more on the events elsewhere.

Why Atlanta? Actually to save money, as funny as that may sound. It turns out that Atlanta is near many Directors, Officers, and staff. Chief Administrative Officer Jenny Hendricks is an easy drive away, two Directors live in town with another a few hours' drive away, and our Secretary is also based in Atlanta. Atlanta has a major airport — one of the busiest in the U.S. — and fares are generally reasonable. We met at a well-priced airport hotel that included breakfast *and* dinner. Add generally mild winter weather, and you have a winning combination. The SER Piedmont Division was fabulous, with Division members attending and arranging for a Saturday no-host dinner and a visit to a layout of one of our newest MMRs after we concluded our business.

This meeting was fairly non-controversial with many items of business but few motions and few issues of major concern. Indeed, there are some good signs on the horizon that may indicate a turning point for the future of our hobby. As I had hoped, it appears the newest post-Millennial generation, as young as they are, may be embracing the simpler toys of their grandparents. Toy manufacturers see an up-spike in construction toys and trains, as recently reported by CBS news from the New York Toy Fair in February. Our Vice-President—Administration, Clark Kooning, is firmly convinced that younger modelers are out there but not reached by traditional means. We had quite a lively conversation about that assertion. As much as I would love to be proven right about the challenges we face with younger generations, I hope I am wrong.



**NMRA President Charlie Getz**

Many years ago, a study by Rutgers College profiled the Millennial generation. As shown by Lionel's new modernistic "train" set, which resembles a thrill ride, we would have to change the hobby in ways that would render it unrecognizable to meet their particular expectations. As Vice-President for Special Projects, Gerry Leone, has noted, the younger generations will define their interests — not us — and there is little we can do to change that. Canadian Director Fred Headon, Clark Kooning, and Atlantic Director Kathy Millatt made a compelling case for not over-reacting to the challenges posed by Millennials. That is where I was wrong, and that is where I agree with these very wise NMRA leaders. We need to remember that the younger generations are not uniform. Kathy is a Gen X'er and they are different from Millennials. Not all Millennials follow the generalized profile either. While I still believe that with our limited resources and time, pursuing the Baby Boomers is the most cost effective way to grow in the short run, we will also continue to examine ways to attract the younger generations — a challenge for sure, but one worth meeting.

This was the last full meeting for Western Director Jack Hamilton, who cannot run for another term due to term limits. We wished him well and thanked him for his numerous contributions over the years he served. Jack redefined the post of "Lead Director," infusing that job with energy and working on many projects, including the Long Range Plan (LRP), "NMRA 2019." Most recently, he

headed our Recruitment and Retention Committee (R&R). Their report was another very important element of the meeting. What wonderful and proven methods they presented in a cogent summary in a 103-page draft handbook! The Committee will now refine and amend their work in light of comments and suggestions made, honing the message and making it useful at all levels of the NMRA. Piedmont Division, our host for the meeting, produced a wonderful tri-fold brochure that might serve as a model for a summary of the R&R proposals for recruiting members. Retention is the best way to grow the NMRA. If 90 percent of our members stayed, we would grow. Last year, we had a positive growth number for the first time in years. Look for some specifics on the R&R effort after the Indianapolis convention this summer.

We reviewed a draft Division Superintendent's Handbook, designed to assist newcomers to the office on what to expect and what to do. These suggestions — not commands — are very well done. Again, this is a work in progress and may soon be joined by a Region President's Handbook. Training officers is a needed step in NMRA development. Getting involved is rewarding, and we have been lax in providing on-the-job training. I give thanks to Education Department Manager Bruce DeYoung for authoring this effort and he gives credit to PNR and SER for their work.

Bob Weinheimer has coordinated our member discount program, and it continues to grow. We have a number of



rail museums and operations offering discounts; we want to include hobby shops and manufacturers next. If you know of a shop offering discounts or special offers to NMRA members, please let me know, and I'll advise Bob. We will be presenting a summary of these discounts on the members only pages of our website shortly. We want to increase the number of NMRA members — what better way than discounts available only to members at a wide range of related outlets? From hobby shops to rental cars to manufacturers, who knows where this effort may lead? We are taking baby steps, but we are starting thanks to Bob and Jack Hamilton, who helped me get this going.

There was a lot of other important business conducted on Friday and Saturday, but let me mention two other items. We made a technical change to how the National Nominating Committee is structured, but more importantly, emphasized the importance of nominating committees overseas and in Canada for posts, for which those members vote. This includes officers and Directors subject to vote in those locations. Our ABCE, which stands for Australasian, British, Canadian, and European Regions, are very important to us. Atlantic Director Kathy Millatt shared R&R work done by the BR for example, and we discussed growing pains with the ER. We also discussed our increasingly close ties with China and MOROP in Europe — ties we need to strengthen to ensure a healthy future for our hobby and our organization.

But you know the highlight of this and every other meeting? It is the dedication of a room full of folks and the hundreds behind them to the NMRA. Just to mention a few isolated examples, IT manager Ben Sevier not only dedicates hundreds of hours to our web and IT services, but also spent days prior to the meeting in nearby Soddy Daisy upgrading our member database to modernize it. Our VP, Special Projects Gerry Leone produced and arranged for our use of a commercial video, some 58 minutes

long, on attending an NMRA convention. He and Chuck Diljak produce the free *EBULLETIN* every other month. Our Department managers keep the machinery humming smoothly and invest countless hours doing so. Secretary John Stevens not only keeps the minutes but also helps with the Boy Scout program, the surplus MDC car shells effort, and even hosting a Delta Air Museum tour for attendees. CFO Frank Koch not only keeps us solvent, but also spends a lot of time assisting headquarters with myriad issues. Each Director contributes through projects and Regional convention attendance. Our RAC Director, Steve August, who has reinvigorated the Regional Advisory Council (RAC) made up of Region presidents, presented almost all Region's reports for mid-year. Our Pacific and Atlantic directors spend 15-plus hours on flights to and from the U.S. just to work in a stuffy room to improve the organization. Kathy was nice enough to transport some UK kits for me otherwise not easily attained in the U.S. Our lead Director works closely with me to discuss problems and issues 24/7. Our wonderful CAO Jenny Hendricks, whose dedication to the NMRA far exceeds her pay, oversees an excellent staff working hard to keep us going.

This list is far from inclusive! Indeed, I could write many columns about the solid people who keep us strong on every level. They and you *are* the NMRA. I am proud to be a part of such a fabulous team. The next time you hear someone grouse about the NMRA and what it has or has not done for him or her or the hobby, remember the mid-year. Remember all the folks who came from around the world just to spend days in a meeting room so you would not have to, who sacrifice their hobby time to improve yours.

That's enough for this time; see you next time. Until then, those are my thoughts; what are yours?





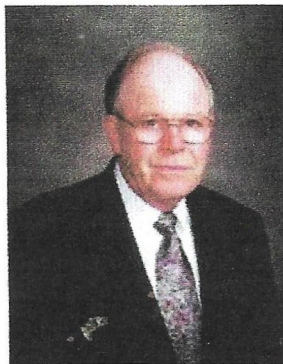
## 2016 April Larry Deagon, MMR #182 Tribute

### In Memoriam

It is a bittersweet task to report the death of a longtime Master Model Railroader in Birmingham, Larry Deagon. He died on December 28, 2015 after a long illness.

Larry's railroad is the HO scale Delta Central, a beautiful railroad filled with scratchbuilt buildings based on numerous field trips to the Maryland and Pennsylvania countryside by Larry and his wife, Jane. The skill and attention to detail that Larry put into every model whether rolling stock, structure or motive power brought a benchmark of modeling to the Birmingham area that few surpassed and all area modelers attempted to emulate. The Delta Central has been featured in the Model Railroad press, on a PBS special and at several SER and area conventions including the 1988 NMRA national convention. The Delta Central was the first truly "operational" model railroad in the area and for several years, the railroad was operated on a regular basis by Larry and a group of friends in Birmingham. Many fellow modelers honed their operational skills and Achievement Certificates on the Delta Central.

Larry achieved MMR #182 in 1992 completing all but one of the AP certificates. Larry was a key member of and mentor to "The Wrecking Crew," a 100% NMRA club in Birmingham. He took his role of mentor seriously, as he also took seriously his leadership role in the Birmingham school system, leading youth to new heights in music and



personal development. Larry also served in key leadership roles in the Southeastern Region, including AP Chairman. In recent years, the Delta Central RR

underwent modernization to DCC and refurbishment by a group of modelers led by the Wrecking Crew, as Larry's health declined and he was unable to work on it himself. He was the perfect supervisor and taskmaster, nothing less than "done right" would do. Larry had a special way of letting

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you know when he thought you could "do it better." It was fun and a privilege to work with Larry on a fine model railroad like the Delta Central.

It is always sad to lose a friend but it was difficult to watch a man of so many talents and accomplishments taken from life by

illness long before he was taken in death. His wife Jane and his kids and grandchildren will miss him and his fellow modelers, who had a special bond with him, will miss him too.

*Bob Beaty, MMR 192  
Past President, SER*

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**Tom Brennison earned Master Model Railroader 571.**



## Lee Riley of Bachmann

Normally, I do not write obituaries or comment on the wonderful people we lose each year. The BOD adjourns meetings in honor of those members and significant model railroaders lost in the previous months before the meeting. Sadly, we will do so again in Indianapolis. For as we all age, we lose members. But this month, I want to make an exception for Lee Riley, whose obit from his family is reprinted at the end of this editorial.

Lee's contributions to the model railroading industry are legendary but especially to narrow gauge. It is not a stretch to say Lee created 1:20.3 narrow gauge in true three-foot gauge, despite pressure to stay with the earlier LGB ratio of 1:22.5. By doing so, Large Scale really took off, and a host of scale products was introduced. Starting with a battery-powered Christmas Train set, but with an engine based on the Tweetsie line, products continued to flow, revolutionizing Garden Railroading.

However, it was the popularization of the then-obscure On30" that cemented Lee's greatness. Before then, On3 was mildly popular but eclipsed by Sn3, allowing more to be built in the same space. Bachmann's introduction of an extensive line in On30" revolutionized narrow gauge modeling and severely cut into Sn3's popularity, as well as undercutting On3. But it also brought narrow gauge RTR to a new batch of modelers intrigued by the funky look and very reliable running qualities. Lee also swore that he secretly designed his On30" engines to be easily converted to On3. How much of this was "Lee being Lee" and how much truth is debatable, though *Narrow Gauge and Short Line Gazette* editor Bob Brown does admit many engines were convertible as he did so.

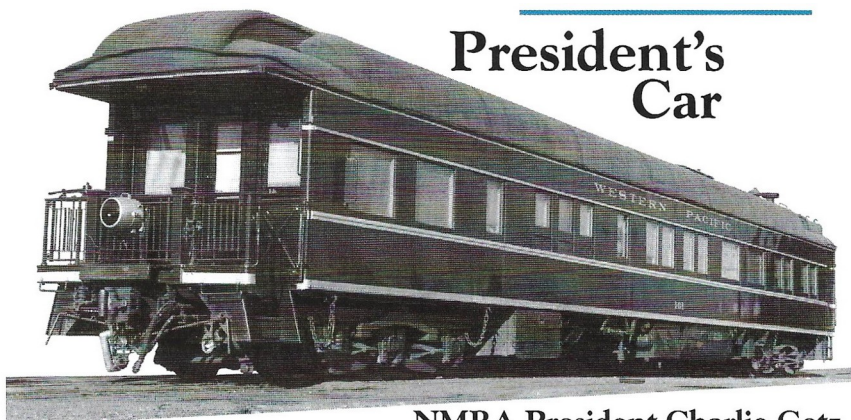
Whatever the reality, Bachmann's prodigious production of both Large Scale and On30" narrow gauge made model railroading in the larger scales easy and reliable. And Lee was a stickler for conforming to NMRA Standards. He insisted that the Chinese makers adopt NMRA wheel

and coupler standards for these products, as well as Bachmann's extensive line of HO and N products. That some did not earn Conformance Warrants was generally no fault of Lee but add-on electronics from another firm posing technical glitches when it came to Standards. As a result, Bachmann went from a toy train manufacturer in the 1960s to the respected maker of exquisite equipment it is today. Lee deserves credit for much of that. He also was a major part of Bachmann's large presence at the National Train Show each year. He felt this was a premier annual event meriting Bachmann's strong support and involvement.

Lee Riley was a firm believer in the importance of the NMRA and of preserving the history of our hobby. Lee was a valued member of the NMRA Howell-Day Museum Committee, representing industry interests and bringing a wealth of knowledge and history. Lee was notorious for claiming knowledge on just about every facet of product history and, in many cases, direct involvement. As far-fetched as some of those claims sounded at the time, they were often true. Lee was a major supporter of both the Museum concept and the CSRM Gallery Exhibit I have discussed in previous columns. It is, therefore, not surprising that his family has suggested a donation to the NMRA for that exhibit in lieu of flowers or other contributions.

Lee was more than an integral part of the hobby; he was a character. Talking to Lee was like drinking from a fire hydrant. The often disjointed but always entertain-

## President's Car



NMRA President Charlie Getz

ing thoughts spilled out at a rapid pace, as if Lee feared you might leave, missing an essential fact. Former NMRA President Allen Pollock, who chairs the Museum committee, had a close working relationship with Lee and knew him as a friend far longer than I did. They often roomed together at train shows or meetings. Once at a Narrow Gauge convention, my wife Margaret sat in disbelief as Lee spewed a rapid-fire torrent of discussion on some topic over breakfast. Allen wandered by, sized up the situation and Margaret's disbelief, and said, "Shut up, Lee; she is not interested in all of that." Well, Margaret was horrified at the rudeness until both Lee and Allen assured her this was quite common and marked the close friendship between them. Lee relied on Allen to tell him when he was over the top.

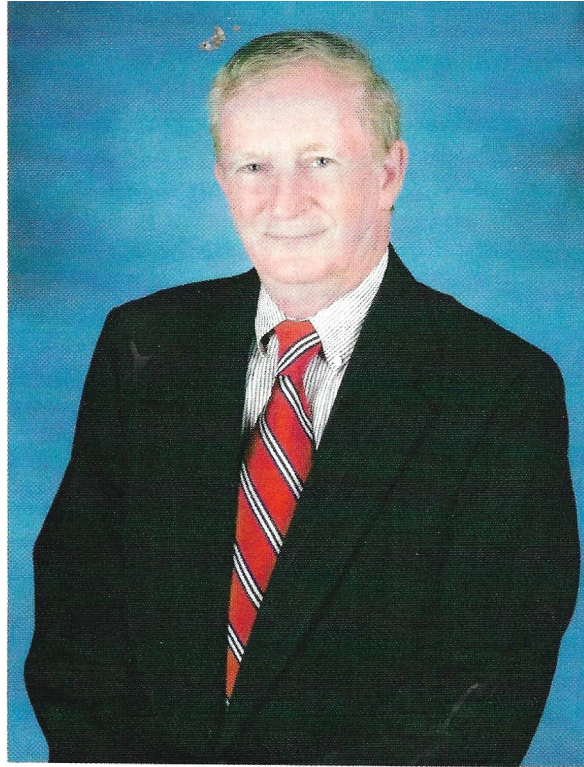
Last year, on my Asian trip, Lee kindly advised me of a "must see" hobby shop in Hong Kong. Lee prided himself on his knowledge of Asia, forged over decades of many trips there for Bachmann. So, I went to visit the shop, which was as good as Lee had said, meeting the owner, Mr. Lee, whom Lee professed to know well. Mr. Lee, however, seemed puzzled by the identity of Lee Riley until I mentioned his volume of conversation. A knowing smile came over Mr. Lee's face as he exclaimed, "Oh, you mean the man who never stops talking!"

Well, Lee Riley was no blowhard! He actually did almost everything he claimed to have done and was always a staunch supporter of the hobby and the NMRA. He died in early March, unexpectedly,



**2016 May**

**LEE RILEY TRIBUTE (NMRA AWARD WINNER)**



while at work. His son Clinton told me his dad was very proud of his job and rarely missed a day of work. Lee lived in West Virginia but worked in Philadelphia, so going to work was no small feat. He was slated to retire at the end of March, and we were exchanging emails on the day he died about the exciting possibility of an overseas NMRA convention in 2022. Of course, we also discussed a trip to Cass, West Virginia, which he had urged me to visit for years, as well as his planned trip with Allen Pollock to Europe later this year. We exchanged emails with Lee's last to me at 3:43PM EST. Shortly thereafter, he complained to his secretary that he did not feel well, went to his office where he was later found with his head down on the desk.

Lee's death left me shaken not just because he was such a wonderful outsized character, but also because we had corresponded minutes before he died. His emails were like his speech, a disjointed stream of consciousness but endearing. After his death had been reported on the Internet, I sent a message asking Lee to

respond if he was okay. No response was received. I close with the edited notes on his life from his family.

"Born in Baltimore, Maryland, Lee Riley was the son of the late Luther and Miriam Riley of Baltimore and served with honor in the 175th Infantry Regiment, 29th Infantry Division of the Maryland National Guard from 1965 to 1970.

"He was a kind man whose lifelong passions were model railroading, riding live steam trains throughout the world, folk and bluegrass music, the West Virginia and Western Maryland mountains, and his wife and family.

"A distinguished member of the hobby industry for nearly 50 years, Lee's professional career began in 1967 as one of the original staff members of Pro Custom Hobbies in Catonsville, Maryland. He was director of product development of Associated Hobby Manufacturers before joining Philadelphia-based Bachmann Industries Ltd., the world's largest model train maker, in the 1980s as Director Product Development and later Vice President of Product Development until



## **2016 May    LEE RILEY TRIBUTE (NMRA AWARD WINNER)**

his death. During his career, he also worked or consulted for GSB, Lionel, Life-Like Products, MDC, Model Power, TYCO, Westside Models, and others.

"Lee was a longtime active member of the National Model Railroad Association (NMRA) and received the association's prestigious Pioneer Award. He was inducted into the Model Railroad Industry's Hall of Fame in 2004. [He also received the Distinguished Service Award.]

"He was widely known as an innovator in the model train industry. He is the inventor or co-inventor on eight industry-related patents granted by the United States Patent and Trademark Office.

"Lee was one of 100 volunteers who helped bring America's history to the country by participating in the rebuilding of the T-1-class, No. 2101, the first steam engine to pull the American Freedom Train, during the nation's Bicentennial celebration. The steam engine remains on display at the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad Museum in Baltimore.

"His wife Frances Riley of Middletown, Delaware; two sons, Clinton Riley and his wife Kathleen of Hamilton, New Jersey; John Lilley and his wife Laura of Middletown, Delaware; four grandchildren, Alexander and Maggie Riley and Sarah and Ryan Lilley; his brother W. Brooks Riley

and his wife Beverly of Parkville, Maryland, survive Lee.

"In lieu of flowers, the family suggests making a donation to the development of the NMRA's Magic of Scale Model Railroading Exhibit at the California State Railroad Museum in Lee's memory. <https://donations.nmra.org/>"

Our deepest condolences go to his family and my thanks to his son Clinton for the picture and biographical information. That is all for this time. Those are my thoughts, what are yours?



## **2016 June**

**Bruce Petrarca earned Master Model Railroader 574.**

**Mike Mackey earned Master Model Railroader 573.**

## **2016 July**

**Is the NMRA going Digital? The answer was: We already are and are continuing to move in that direction.**

## **2016 July**

**From Christina Ganzer: NMRA Marketing Consultant: The NMRA Boosts its Social Media Presence.**

**John Travis earned Master Model Railroader 575.**

**Rev. Dr. Vern Cracknell earned Master Model Railroader 567.**



**2016 September Convention Attendees at Indy 500 museum.**



**NMRA Convention was in Indianapolis. Here is the proof!**

**2016 September**

**Jerry Wilson earned Master Model Railroader 577.**

**2016 October**





# Celebrate-a-Railroad: The Milwaukee Road

## Trainfest Continues Tradition

article by Angela Podewils and photographs/artwork courtesy MRHA

**M**embers of the Wisconsin Southeastern (WISE) Division held the first-ever Trainfest on 6th Street in downtown Milwaukee in 1972. This single-day event grew rapidly in participation and attendance, and has now developed into "America's Largest Operating Model Railroad Show." Trainfest celebrates its 45th anniversary this year.

For this year's event (November 12–13), Trainfest has invited small cottage industries to join the 110 manufacturers and hobby dealers who will be on-site. These expert craftsmen have created businesses based on their modeling passion and offer a variety of train products from structures and scenery to both DCC and LCC.

Again in 2016, Trainfest is expanding its model railroad clinics presented by experienced model railroaders, railroad historical societies, and model railroad manufacturing manufacturers.

Trainfest's exciting tradition, "Celebrate-a-Railroad," continues this year. Annually, Trainfest showcases one historical railroad as the theme for that year with a museum quality historical photo display, models, and layouts of that railroad, as well as other fun activities and new products.

Trainfest 2016 has chosen to celebrate The Milwaukee Road, partnering with the Milwaukee Road Historical Association to reprise many of the favorite features from



the 2015's Celebrate-a-Railroad, including the 32-panel historical photo display, clinic series, original painting, and limited edition HO-scale freight car.

Why Celebrate-a-Railroad? In the 1830s, railroads revolutionized communication, transportation, and the economy. Many towns and cities that were separated by vast distances were now connected by the railroad. Railroads enhanced transportation of goods and supplies for a variety of industries, promoting growth and development. Although now most traffic travels by automobile, truck, or airplane, the railroads were (and continue to be) integral to the United States' economy. Trainfest is honoring these past contributions through the Celebrate-a-Railroad program.

For more information about Trainfest and up-to-the-minute news about the Celebrate-a-Railroad: The Milwaukee Road, visit [Trainfest.com](http://Trainfest.com).

If you have a story or question about The Milwaukee Road, please reach out to Trainfest at [info@trainfest.com](mailto:info@trainfest.com).





# Preserving Community History

## Enriching our Hobby and NMRA Membership

by Peter Youngblood, MMR, At-Large North American Director



I don't know about you, but sometimes the obvious is so much so that we simply don't see it, like the old "can't see the forest for the trees" analogy. In this instance, my SER Director friend, Buddy Black, made a comment that resonated loudly with my way of thinking, namely that we in the NMRA are too easily involved in the details of a problem to look at the situation as a whole. Seeking solutions inwardly can easily overlook opportunities outwardly. Buddy's comment suggested we show our local communities what the NMRA can do for them to help preserve their heritage. Preservation help from NMRA members, however, *is contingent on community participation.*

His comment guided me past the trees, and I could see the elusive forest. There, plain as day, was another opportunity for member retention and recruitment — no matter where we live.

Almost every community will have, or did have, at least one of these: a City Hall, a Court Building, a Library, a Fire Station, Police Station, maybe even a Museum or a Railroad Depot. The depot in my town was built in 1908 by the Nashville, Chattanooga & St. Louis Railroad (see photo). They all began and grew around a centrally located or "main" street.

As model railroaders, we've developed skills that enable us to serve our personal modeling interests like Jules Verne time machines. We can build miniature recreations from years bygone, of today, or even of years yet to come as perceived in our imaginations. We are, therefore, well equipped to expand our talents and skill sets outwardly into our communities. What community wouldn't like to have a scale model of their depot (or any other aforementioned structure) proudly on public display? For starters, contact your local government. Bring supportive materials on your initial visit.

My point: Just recently I met with the Executive Director of my local museum to renew our Division's participatory agreement in exchange for BSA Railroad Merit Badge classroom space. Our two previous annual commitments were as volunteers at events that did little to further interest in model railroading, let alone NMRA member recruitment while failing to utilize our hobby skills to the museum's benefit.

Preliminary renegotiations concluded with a much better renewal agreement satisfying all requirements and a better mutually beneficial relationship, including a few unexpected "extras" that weren't requested. The catalyst in this case? My Division's members would provide the materials and skill

sets to build an HO-scale model of the road that served as the town's Main Street in the 1860s, including the railroad track, depot, water tower, and hotel once located parallel to it. It was agreed the project would *not* be undertaken without community involvement to include members of local government, the local historical associations, archival photography, plans, supervised youth/school groups, and dedicated public display space built and provided by the museum. The completion deadline was set three years hence. A first-time test platform, this could lead to other historic preservation projects.

Unexpectedly, the BSA program moved to a different location and this particular project is now on hold, but preserving local history with scale models is a great way to involve members of Division's (regardless of size) looking for something innovative to do while enjoying public recognition (Retention), teaching and sharing first hand with *the community team, young or old* the variety of useful skills that model railroading as a hobby presents (Recruitment), and the pride and satisfaction realized from having played a part in the construction of a piece of local history now on public display.

There's an old cowboy saying, "If you're not makin' dust, yer prob'ly eatin' it." Go on out there and make it. 🤠





**2016 December**

## **PAGE MARTIN TRIBUTE: 1<sup>st</sup> NMRA MARKETING DIRECTOR**

### **In Memoriam**

It is with sadness that we announce the passing of our first Director of Marketing, Page Martin, from a long-term illness. Page worked as Marketing Director as long as his health allowed and was instrumental in creating a program to advance the NMRA that still resonates today.

Page was principal director and executive producer with Old Hampton Entertainment. Page's career has included a stint as Director of Special Events for Walt Disney Parks and Resorts during the company's historic 50th Anniversary. He engineered major events in the U.S., Europe, Latin America, and Japan, and was a creative consultant for Fortune 100 organizations. Page was also an executive producer with one of the industry's largest providers of corporate entertainment and communications.

In addition, Page served on the Board of Directors of the Long Beach Community Garden Association and was an Assistant Coach in the Beach Cities Youth Lacrosse League.

He was the former owner of Arbour Models and modeled upstate New York, near the Syracuse area, in N scale.

**Page Edward Martin, passed away in his sleep on October 6, 2016, after a long illness. He was 56. Page was born on August 14, 1960 and grew up in Syracuse and Tully, NY along with his five siblings, children of Homer and Earleen Martin, who owned and ran the HSM Printing Co. The family business is still thriving and a fixture in Syracuse.**

**Page was a true renaissance man who worked in many fields in the theatre. He was a make-up artist, costume designer, set builder, production manager and producer, specializing in animatronics. During his career. Page worked for many prestigious entertainment companies including the Walt Disney Company both in Orlando and in California, where he moved in 1993.**

**Friends and family will remember him best for the stunning and imaginative meals he produced. He approached cooking, as he did everything, with flair, professionalism and generosity. As his mobility started to be compromised, Page took on another role; as an author. His mystery novel "Promise to Pay the Bearer", the adventures of Liam Ross, won numerous awards both domestically and abroad. He was working on his second book when he passed away.**



## **2017 January Here's a great group of Volunteers!**



*Above:* Earning the Association Volunteer AP Certificate is just the beginning. Pictured is most of the team that hosted the Rocky Mountain Region Convention "Golden Spike Limited" in 2014 in Salt Lake City along with Bruce Chubb, and his wife, who were speakers. That convention was good practice for preparing to host the upcoming NMRA 2019 National Convention in Salt Lake City. [www.nmra2019slc.org](http://www.nmra2019slc.org)

**Dave Capron earned Master Model Railroader 576.**

## **2017 February**

**Rod Vance earned Master Model Railroader 581.**

## **2017 April**

**Jim Wanlass earned Master Model Railroader 585.**

## **2017 June**

**The President wrote in his column about why people joined or re-joined the NMRA. Interesting that STANDARDS was given as the top response.**



## 2017 Elections Report

There were three national positions and two NMRA Canada positions up for election for 2017. One national position was the RAC Director, which has a different schedule than the other four and was completed in late 2016 with Steve August returning in that position. This election was run electronically.

Three of the remaining positions were NMRA Canada President, NMRA Canada Vice-President, and Canadian District Director. NMRA Canada Ballot Committee Chair Stephen Wood ran the election using a combination of electronic voting (87% of membership) and paper ballots (13% of membership). He used ElectionBuddy to send an electronic voting invitation to all of those members who had supplied NMRA Canada an email address. He also mailed a paper ballot to those members of NMRA Canada who have not supplied an email address. Approximately 35 percent of the membership voted with 38 percent of those offered electronic voting submitting a vote and 21 percent of those offered a paper ballot submitting a vote. The results of the election were:

**President: Steve McMullin**

**Vice President: Ed Molenkamp**

**Canadian District Director: Fred Headon**

The last position up for election was the Central District Director. This election also utilized paper and electronic ballots. HQ supplied the paper ballots, and they mailed every member living in the Central District a paper ballot with 4,320 paper ballots mailed.

Assistant Secretary Rick Coble ran the electronic voting via ElectionBuddy. We had 3,534 members (82% of membership) who had provided us with email addresses.

The electronic voting ended on 3/1/17 with 20.6 percent of the membership who were invited to vote electronically doing so. The results of this part of the election were known within a couple of hours of the election ending.

The paper ballot deadline was 2/28/17. The members were allowed to have their ballots postmarked as late as 2/28/17 with the ballots to be received at HQ NLT 3/10/17. The ballots were mailed to National Ballot Committee Chair Dave Liesse, and he and his committee processed them on 4/1/2017. The final vote was very close with Bill Neale defeating Steven Kaplan by a mere 21 votes.

We did have 50 members who voted by both paper ballot and electronically. It said right on the paper ballot that if you voted by paper ballot and electronically that the paper ballot would be deemed invalid, and the electronic vote would be used.

We are planning to use more and more electronic voting. Electronic voting is less expensive for both the NMRA and the membership. The results of the electronic portion of the election are known within hours of the completion of an election rather than waiting for 30–45 days to get the results.

If you wish to vote electronically in the future, you need to provide the NMRA with an email address. If you have already been on the NMRA website, you can update your information by going to the MEMBER INFO section of the website. You can update your information by clicking the UPDATE box on the right-hand side. If you have never been on the website, you need to log on and request to join. You will be contacted when you have been allowed access to the MEMBERS ONLY section of the website.

John Stevens, NMRA Secretary

## 2017 July

### Jack Tingstad earned Master Model Railroader 591.



## What is the NMRA?

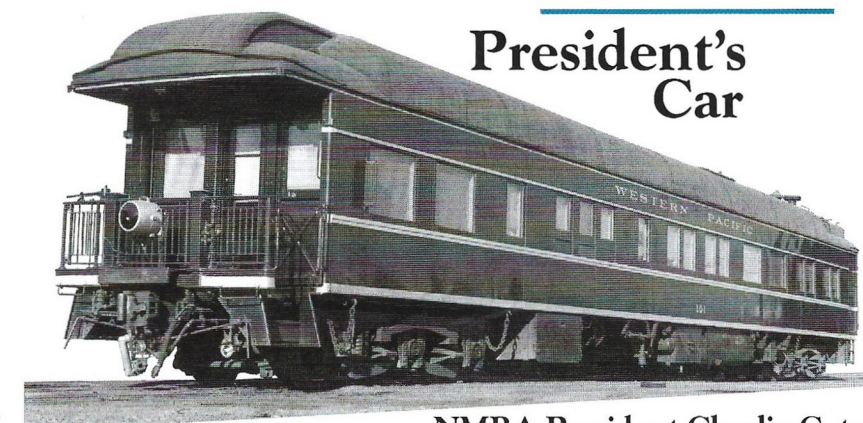
In this column, the President of the NMRA is asking what appears to be the most obvious question yet. What do I mean, “What is the NMRA?” The NMRA is the National Model Railroad Association! Gosh, everyone knows what the NMRA is ... or does he or she? I ask the question because in my travels to different Regions and talking with a multitude of members, I am amazed by the divergent views of just what “NMRA” means to those members.

Some see the NMRA as a large club. Others see us as an International Association. Still, others see the National level as a major structural nuisance but necessary to keep the Region and Division levels operating. Quite a few, in fact, see no need for a National structure or even Regional. They are quite happy at the Division level. For them, the NMRA is their local friends and buddies. A few even see us as an anachronistic organization whose time has passed.

In most of these views and so many more, there may be a grain of truth. (I do disagree strongly with anachronistic. I do not think so!) For example, how often have we said, and meant it, that the most effective level of the NMRA is the Division? Yet, to conclude the Division is the NMRA is as wrong as concluding the Division is not important.

The NMRA is a single organization with worldwide sub-parts as part of that single organization. How many of you look at it that way? With 18 Regions and some 156 Divisions, there are surely not 175 NMRA's. Amazingly, some look at the NMRA exactly that way; to them, the NMRA is local, and anything not local is of zero interest. Perhaps it is a sign of how effective an organization we are that so many feel an ownership interest at a *local* level. For those members, the NMRA begins and ends at the local level.

A few others believe it is the National level that is all-important, set-



## President's Car

NMRA President Charlie Getz

ting policies and guiding industry to ensure a healthy hobby. Divisions and even Regions are necessary to provide outlets for members, but National is where it is at. Perhaps, surprisingly, the Board of Directors and Officers do not see the NMRA that way. Nevertheless, I have heard some members express that viewpoint.

In my opinion, the NMRA, in many ways, is most of the above but much more. So allow me to share what I think the NMRA is and see if you agree.

#1 — The NMRA is the oldest and largest scale model railroad association. Formed in 1935, we have a proud history of promoting and supporting scale model railroading. That does not mean we do not embrace our tinsplate members and friends, but our focus has been and remains scale.

#2 — The NMRA is an organization that sets standards to ensure interoperability. One of the major reasons those gentlemen came together in Milwaukee some 82 years ago was to make sure that products worked together. It is a mission we have uniformly pursued and continue to refine. Is this a function no longer needed? I do not think so, as past columns have demonstrated.

#3 — The NMRA is an international organization. We value and appreciate our non-USA members, of which we have many. In fact, we have members in approximately 28 different countries. With Regions in Canada, the United

Kingdom, Australia, and now Europe, we embrace model railroading worldwide. Our hobby truly knows no boundaries, and the development of the hobby in China is but one of many exciting opportunities that bode well for the future.

#4 — The NMRA is an educational organization. Since 1935, we have trained our members to improve their skills and learn new techniques — a mission we continue today. From Division events to Regional conventions to the annual National Convention, we sponsor clinics and lessons on a wide variety of topics, all designed to teach and improve your skills. And now the best of those lessons are available to members online on our web pages. In addition, we feature commercial videos from our corporate partners as part of that free content. We promote *Modeling with the Masters* — a hands-on series of lessons taught by the very best, allowing you to immerse yourself in the technique and skills demonstrated. We publish Data Sheets, and EduTrain brings the very best of instruction to you locally. The Achievement Program helps you improve your skills to achieve that personal goal of becoming a Master Model Railroader — truly a major accomplishment.

#5 — The NMRA is a leader in innovation. From the earliest days, the NMRA has supported, encouraged, and on occasion, cajoled major developments in the hobby industry. Whether a bet-



**2017 August**

## **What is the NMRA? Cont.**

ter signaling system in the 1950s to today's revolutionary Layout Command Control, we have been there to push the boundaries for the betterment of our hobby. I admit such efforts, no matter how noble, have not always worked. Remember the X2F coupler? (Still mislabeled the "NMRA coupler"!) But those failures are rare compared to the successes such as the RP-25 wheel profile or DCC Standards.

#6 — The NMRA is a social organization. Most of our members cite the connections and friendships made in the NMRA as the chief benefit of membership. We all know that to be true, but this social benefit is the hardest to sell to prospective new members! They simply do not believe it. After a few years, they are the ones citing friendships as the No. 1 benefit. This element is why so many see the local level as the most important level — the friends you make.

#7 — The NMRA is the spokesperson for the hobby and is respected worldwide. When the *New York Times* or *Wall Street Journal* needs a quote or information on model railroading, they call the NMRA. When 250,000 Chinese railfans and modelers wanted to ensure the best in industry standards and education, they contacted the NMRA. We have strong ties with MOROP — the European Confederation of model railroad as-

sociations and clubs. We partner with the Narrow Gauge Conventions and RPM meets as well as N-scale groups, modular groups, and a variety of others. All see value in the NMRA, as does the commercial press.

As I have often said, even if you are an NMRA-basher, exactly what harm has the NMRA done to the hobby? We have accomplished much good over the decades as we close in on our 100th Anniversary. Those seven bullet points above could easily be expanded to seven more.

So what is the NMRA? It is all of the above and so much more. Perhaps the most important definition is this one: the NMRA is *you* and what *you* make of it. Without you, it is nothing. With you, it is everything. Thanks for being a member, and thanks for being the NMRA!

Well, that's enough for this time out. Whether you agree or disagree with me, we always welcome your thoughts, insights, and comments. As I always say — those are my thoughts... what are yours?

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Charlie". The script is fluid and cursive, with a large, looping initial "C".

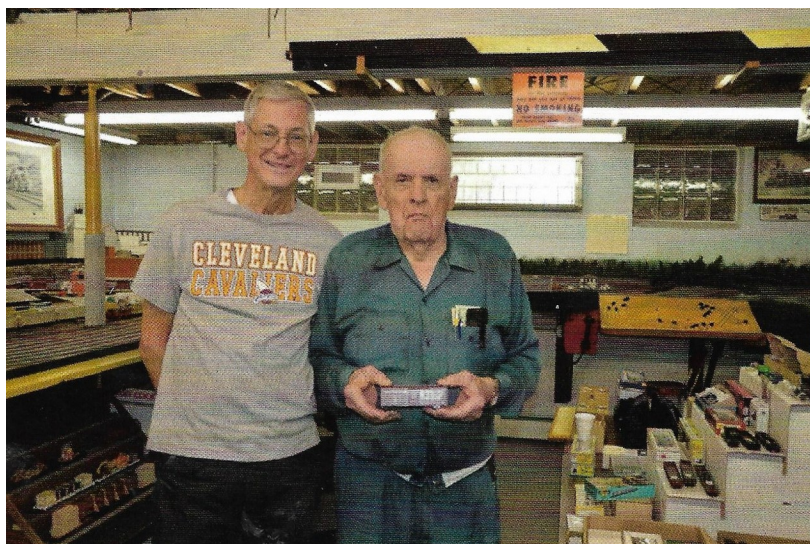
**2017 August**

**Dale Sproule earned Master Model Railroader 583.**



**2017 August**

**Harley Smith Tribute (right) 1927 - 2017**



**In Memoriam: Harley Smith 1927-2017**

**L**ong-time and Life NMRA member Harley Smith of Hambden, Ohio, passed away May 15, 2017. He was 89 years old. Harley was a founder of Division 5, the Western Reserve Division of the MidCentral Region of the NMRA in Northeastern Ohio, in 1961, and served in many capacities within the Division over the years. He was especially proud of holding monthly operating sessions on his

Ohio Northern HO railroad for 50 years. The photo depicts NMRA member Terry Kolenc presenting Harley with a memorial boxcar honoring his 50th year of operations just a few months ago. Harley is survived by his wife Ellen, daughter LuAnn, son-in-law Dennis Burger, and son Dale and his wife Deborah, four grandchildren, six great-grandchildren, and three step-grandchildren.

Harley and Dale are the proprietors of Smith and Son ballast and have supplied many model railroaders in the Midwest with their natural ballast scale product line. Dale plans to continue the business in his father's honor.

**2017 September**

**Jerry (Mitch) Michnewicz earned Master Model Railroader 594.**

**Bill Busacca earned Master Model Railroader 587.**

**Ron Hopkins earned Master Model Railroader 592.**



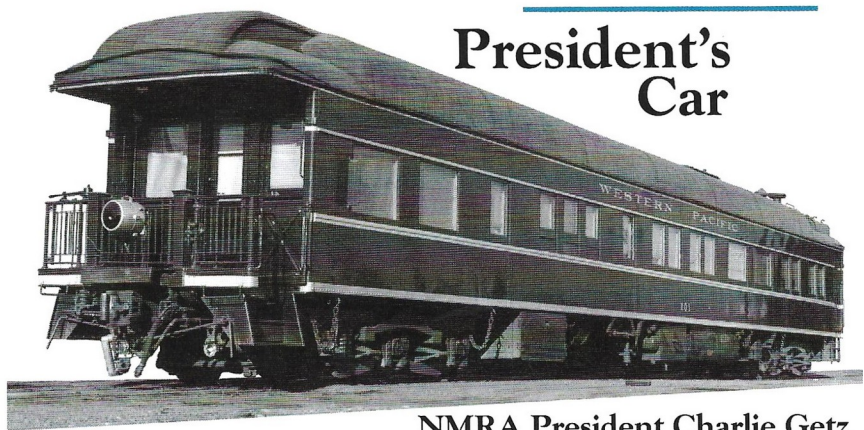
## Gallery Exhibit/ Library Update

**I**t has been a long process, but I am happy to announce that the long-promised Gallery Exhibit ("Exhibit") and Kalmbach Memorial Library ("Library") move are finally underway. But first, a little history and explanation are in order.

The Exhibit was first proposed more than a decade ago. Benchmark Publications' publisher and MMR Bob Brown once said: "To attract people to our hobby, you must show them what we do." We know from the success of train shows and the World's Greatest Hobby campaign that such public exhibits work well and inform and excite the public about our hobby.

As a non-profit educational association, educating the public about the importance of railroads in our society and the role played by model railroading is part of our core mission. Thus, the Exhibit was conceived as a permanent or long-term "train show" exhibition designed to show the public what our hobby is all about and its history. We shopped the concept to a variety of possible venues to find a home where we could economically display this exhibit to large crowds of visitors. Although many venues expressed interest, space considerations or conflicts with their mission precluded our exhibit. We contacted the Baltimore & Ohio Museum, Railroad Museum of Pennsylvania, Colorado Railroad Museum, and the National Transportation Museum in St. Louis. Of these, only the Colorado Railroad Museum expressed interest, but at the cost of our acquiring land adjacent to their facilities and erecting our own building — a prohibitive expense.

The California State Railroad Museum, "CSRM," similarly initially expressed concern about space and also the appropriateness of such an exhibit. However, we were fortunate in two regards. First, the CSRM had a difficult-to-fill space on the mezzanine or "Gallery" level overlooking the interior Roundhouse



## President's Car

### NMRA President Charlie Getz

section of the Museum. This space is used for traveling exhibits, but its unusual semi-circular area and positioning made permanent displays difficult.

Secondly, the CSRM had recently opened an exhibit on that level as a result of a major private bequest, highlighting a toy train collection. The Sefton Toy Train Exhibit is a permanent part of CSRM's exhibits and very popular with the public. Based on this exhibit, we approached CSRM, pitching our scale model railroad exhibit as complimentary to the Sefton exhibit and perfect for the difficult Gallery space. To our delight, CSRM was interested, and after preliminary discussions, the parties entered into a Memorandum of Understanding in 2009 followed by review and approval of a preliminary plan for the exhibit created by Bob Brown and the Howell-Day Museum Committee. So optimistic were the parties that during the 2011 Sacramento NMRA National Convention, a "carpet-cutting" ceremony marking the start of the project received widespread publicity.

There matters sat for six long years as we awaited final approval and the necessary legal paperwork from CSRM. In the interim, we raised \$250,000 from our members and corporate partners because we have promised that this Exhibit will not use dues money. The estimate for the project's fabrication and installation is between \$500,000 and \$750,000. We will fund that amount by donation.

Implementation delays were due to a problem that involved CSRM's parent

agency, the California Department of Parks and Recreation. Apparently, DPR, for noble reasons, did not spend all of its appropriations, retaining those funds in a reserve account but not reporting that to the Legislature. Only in government is a failure to spend every penny perceived as a problem. The resulting "scandal" created a widespread change in management and a lack of interest in anything even slightly controversial. Our Exhibit was "controversial" because it was sponsored by the NMRA, not a recognized museum or institution. Our exhibit was, therefore, unprecedented and problematic in the environment in which DPR found itself.

Fortunately, the new managers were as interested and committed to the Exhibit as were their predecessors, and over the years, Bob Brown and I made numerous trips to Sacramento to re-present the design and philosophy to a series of managers. After much patience and entreaties, CSRM management worked out all the obstacles preventing final approval, and in late June, we finally received the long-promised agreement authorizing the Exhibit. The BOD unanimously approved that agreement in an electronic vote in June to meet a BOD-imposed July 15 deadline for finalizing the agreement.

The agreement could not be more fair or inclusive. I am happy to report all the elements I have described or represented over the years are included. There is no cost to NMRA for the space provided, and utilities/outside maintenance will be performed by CSRM. We will be responsible for interior maintenance, which we



## 2017 September Gallery Exhibit / Library Update Cont.

prefer. We will own the exhibit, which can be moved and used later in a permanent Museum. Although they no longer do so, CSRM has agreed to administer our Library and as promised will:

“... allow members of the NMRA to have access not only to the NMRA collection but also to the CSRM Library and collections within that library under the Library’s current policies and procedures.” (Para 3C)

We have agreed to fund a partial position at the same cost as our former Librarian, to ensure good access for our members and handle any attendant Exhibit maintenance. CSRM has also pledged to negotiate:

“...the extent and nature of any solicitation messages or graphics, which can be displayed to explain to the public the purpose of the Exhibit and the future plans of the NMRA toward a permanent museum. The Parties also anticipate CSRM’s Museum Store may carry merchandise items related to the Exhibit. Such items could include, but are not limited to, publications, graphics, books, or products which might be of interest to the public.” (Para 6)

We are also able to use any CSRM artifacts as part of the exhibit, and storage space will be provided us to refresh the Exhibit as needed. Truly, the parties agreed that it is of mutual benefit to establish this Exhibit “...which will provide educational and interpretive visitor services, and complement CSRM’s existing Small wonders “The Magic of Toy Trains’ exhibit.” (Recitals)

So what? Well, CSRM and Old Town Sacramento together are the sixth most popular tourist destination in California, with the museum attracting more than 600,000 paid entrants a year. Many of those visitors are seniors and children. It took World’s Greatest Hobby 10 years to attract a million visitors — an excellent record. The Exhibit will be exposed to a million visitors in less than two years! Those visitors will see and experience a world-class exhibit of the best of our hobby and some of our

history. This Exhibit is not the Howell-Day Museum but is a taste of what that museum might contain. With tie-ins in the Museum shop, interested visitors will be able to find literature and resources about model railroading and the NMRA.

I can think of no better marketing tool for our hobby. We could not buy this space or exposure at a world-class museum like the CSRM for any price, but the space is free. We provide the exhibit, which we will own. Yes, the Exhibit price is daunting. Yes, we need your support and tax-deductible donations. But with those dollars, you help ensure a future for our hobby and renewed importance for the NMRA. There are so many benefits to this effort that it would take many columns to describe them. Suffice to say, we are on our way. We expect the Exhibit to open by Summer 2018. The Library should be open and functional later this fall.

This is pretty exciting news, and that is only the most recent development. Not long ago, we also announced the unveiling of the Model Railroad Visit Registry, a directory of willing NMRA members who offer the opportunity of a visit when you are in their area. We also unveiled the *Turntable*, a monthly resource summarizing and linking the best of the Internet for our members. A brainstorm of Gerry Leone and marketing consultant Christina Ganzer, this electronic member service offers some exciting information tailored to you. And much more is coming over the next few months.

Well, that’s enough for this time out. Whether you agree or disagree with me, we always welcome your thoughts, insights, and comments. As I always say — those are my thoughts...what are yours? I hope to discuss the BOD meeting in Orlando next time out.





2017 September

Discount Program

## Introducing the Discount Partnership Program... An Exciting New NMRA Member Benefit!

by Christina Ganzer

**Y**ou asked for more value from your NMRA membership — and we've delivered! We're extremely pleased to announce the launch of the NMRA Partnership Discount Program. Available exclusively to members, this program provides discounted purchases from manufacturers from whom you currently buy your model railroading supplies and equipment.

### Current Participating Partners

The following companies are currently partnering with the NMRA to provide exclusive discounts to members. The Partnership Program team is working hard to continuously expand the program to include more of your favorite places to shop!

**CatzPaw Innovations** – This company designs and 3D prints scale model accessories in virtually any scale for model railroads and other hobbies. NMRA members receive a 10% discount on all items not already on sale. [www.catzpaw.com](http://www.catzpaw.com)

**Green Frog Productions** – Producer of hundreds of prototype railroading videos in both DVD and Blu-ray formats. Green Frog will provide a 10% off coupon which can be used on their website. The coupon is in addition to any other discount offers currently running. [www.greenfrog.com](http://www.greenfrog.com)

**LARC Products** – Producers of full custom-sized backdrop graphics and railroad graphics CDs. Hundreds of scenes are available at a 10% discount. [www.larcproducts.com](http://www.larcproducts.com)

**Logic Rail Technologies** – Producer of sophisticated electronics for model railroads, including signaling products and fast clocks. NMRA members get a 10% discount on all purchases. [www.logicrailtech.com](http://www.logicrailtech.com)

**Micro-Mark** – It's the first name in high quality modeling tools and accessories. NMRA members receive a 15% discount when you order. [www.micromark.com](http://www.micromark.com)

**MRC (Model Rectifier Corporation)** – Producer of Prodigy DCC systems, as well as train controls and sound systems, plastic model kits, locomotives, and rolling stock. NMRA members receive a 25% discount off their Light Genie product. [www.modelrectifier.com](http://www.modelrectifier.com)

**Rusty Stumps** – Need details or craftsman kits for your layout? Rusty Stumps produces hundreds of them in HO, O, and S scales. NMRA members receive a 10% discount and also qualify for Rusty Stumps' Loyalty Points for an additional 10% discount as described on the Rusty Stumps website. [www.rustystumps.com](http://www.rustystumps.com)

**Unreal Details** – Maker of Magic Water, an easy, realistic water modeling system developed especially for model railroaders and diorama makers. NMRA members receive a 20% discount. [www.unrealdetails.com](http://www.unrealdetails.com)

### How to Receive Your Discount

Each Partner is offering NMRA members a unique deal. In order to view and take advantage of these discounts, members must first log in to the "Members Only" section of the NMRA.org website. (To get there from the main page, select "Membership" then "Member Home." If you have problems registering or logging in, please contact our website manager at [webmaster@nmra.org](mailto:webmaster@nmra.org).) Select "Benefits" then "Partnership Program" to access the complete list of participating companies and specific instructions on how to receive your discount with each vendor.

Check the website monthly for updates to the Partner list and new discount codes. We hope that you enjoy this latest NMRA member benefit, and we look forward to continuing to add value to your memberships.

Patronize our partners by buying your supplies from them *and* get a discount while you do it! 🛠️



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MODEL RECTIFIER CORPORATION

**Micro-Mark**®  
THE SMALL TOOL SPECIALISTS



## 2017 September **Robert Delafield Rands Jr., 73 year Member!**



### In Memoriam: Robert Delafield Rands Jr.

**B**ob Rands passed away on Thursday, June 22nd. He was a life-long model railroader, starting in the hobby as a teenager in the 1930s. In the 1960s, he became interested in narrow gauge after a trip to Durango and made plans to add a line to his layout. However, he didn't like the rail sizes available. Code 70 and 100 were too big and Code 40, just out, was too small to be prototypical for HO narrow gauge. In 1965, he made a drawing and had Code 55 rail made. The only problem was that he needed about 200 feet of rail, but the minimum amount he could get manufactured was 100 pounds of Nickel-silver, or 22,000 feet. This was the start of Rail Craft, which later became Micro Engineering Inc., the largest supplier of different sizes of model railroad rail and Flex-Trak, among other products. Later, Bob also developed a new rail size, Code 250, for Large Scale. In 1982, he took early retirement from his job at Mallinckrodt Chemical Company (he had a PhD in Organic Chemistry from the University of Illinois) to devote full-time to his business. He continued working, in later years exclusively on new product ideas, until shortly before his death.

• Bob was born in 1919 in Buitenzorg, Java, where his father, Robert D. Rands Sr., was on loan from the U.S. Department of Agriculture to help the Dutch government with a disease in rubber trees. In 1942, Bob married Betty Hall, their marriage lasting 72 years, until 2014 when Betty passed away. Together, they had six children: three girls, Susan, Janet, and Betsy; and three boys, Bob (Robert H.), Ron (Micro Engineering), and Richard (Berkshire Valley Models).

During World War II, Bob worked on the Manhattan Project, first at the National Bureau of Standards in Washington, D.C. (where he grew up), and later, after he was drafted into the Army, at Oak Ridge, Tennessee.

He shared his love of railroading with his family. When his oldest, Susan, was six, Bob started taking them to the "Little Railroad" (the Wabash, Frisco & Pacific) Sunday afternoons to ride behind a live steam locomotive, 12-inch gauge. In 1971, he became president of the line, a position he held for 17 years. He was responsible for more than doubling the length of track, to just over a mile, doing almost all the grading himself by hand.

Bob was an NMRA member for more than 73 years, joining in 1943 and later becoming a lifetime member (a gift from

Betty). He served on the NMRA modular standards committee, narrow gauge modules for a number of years. He helped start an HOon3 modular group, The Mudhens, in the mid-1980s.

Bob received a number of model railroading awards, including an NMRA Distinguished Service Award in 1995, a Pioneer Award from *The N Scale Collector* in 1999, the Kenneth R. Cline Memorial Award from the Mid-Continent Region of the NMRA in 2011, and a Pioneer in Model Railroading from the NMRA in 2013. He was inducted into the Narrow Gauge Hall of Fame and the Model Railroad Industry Association (MRIA, now the Hobby Manufacturers Association) Hall of Fame, both in 2003.

A memorial get-together will be held at the Wabash, Frisco & Pacific Railroad ([wf-prr.com](http://wf-prr.com)) in Glencoe, Missouri, on Saturday, September 23rd to share memories of Bob and Betty. Everyone is invited.

Bob never did get that narrow gauge line added to his layout. The business required too much of his time and, after all their children had left, he and Betty moved to Fenton, Missouri, to be closer to the business, and that layout was dismantled.



## 2017 October      Pictures from the Orlando Convention

**Justin M. Maguire earned Master Model Railroader 597.**



*Above: NMRA President Charlie Getz presented Al Sohl, Jr., MMR, with this year's Gold Award for his scratchbuilt DSP&P waycar. — Staff photo*

**Al Sohl Jr. received Award from Charlie Getz**



*Above: The Celebration Room Staff. Front Row L to R) Ken May, Immediate Past Chair Bob Hamm MMR, and New Chairman Bill Brown MMR. Back Row L to R – Bob Verkuyl, Carl Smeigh, and Photo Contest Coordinator Paul Voelker. — Staff photo*

**The Celebration Room Staff at the Orlando Convention above.**



## Announcing the recipients of the 2017 NMRA President's Award for Service to the Division

By Gerry Leone, MMR - NMRA Vice-President / Special Projects

If you belong to a Division, you know exactly the person we're talking about. We're talking about the guy who puts in far more hours than anyone else. The woman who has done the thankless paperwork tasks for the last 12 years, never complains, and never gets credit. The member who shows up early at every swap meet to help set up the tables, then stays late to help clean up and take everything down.

If you belong to a Division, you know exactly the person we're talking about. We're talking about the guy who puts in far more hours than anyone else. The woman who has done the thankless paperwork tasks for the last 12 years, never complains, and never gets credit. The member who shows up early at every swap meet to help set up the tables, then stays late to help clean up and take everything down.

These are the people who make the NMRA work. These are the people who help their Division, yet never receive much credit for their contributions other than an "attaboy" from the Super. These are the people the NMRA President's Award for Service to the Division is designed to nationally recognize.

The NMRA President's Award for Service to the Division is a new award this year and is long overdue, because, as we all know, the Division is where "the rubber meets the road." It's the face of the NMRA in local neighborhoods all around the world. For decades, there's been a national NMRA President's Award given to members who have donated their time and effort to the *National* organization. Our 18 Regions each give President's Awards to members who have gone above and beyond to help the *Region*. But there has never before been an award that has recognized Division members who've worked tirelessly serving their Division and making the NMRA work locally.

According to its official description, the NMRA President's Award for Service to the Division will be awarded by the NMRA president to no more than one individual per year in each Region who's done out-

standing, "beyond-the-call-of-duty" work to make their Division effective, engaging, and welcoming to members.

This year, at the annual awards banquet at the Orlando Convention, President Charlie Getz announced the winners of the first annual NMRA President's Award for Service to the Division. With the help of NMRA National Board members and Region Presidents, President Getz chose these 18 individuals to be the recipients of this award.

**Terry Davis (Thousand Lakes Region)** — Terry served multiple terms as both Superintendent and newsletter editor of the Prairie Lakes Division, editor of the Minnesota River Valley Division's newsletter, and was Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent of that Division twice. Terry also founded the 100% NMRA Luce Line Railroad Club and served as its president, newsletter editor, and rail show chair, and put on innumerable clinics at both Division and Region conventions.

**Grant McAdam (Australasian Region)** — Grant took on the role of Division Superintendent for Division 3, representing Tasmania and Victoria, for more than 16 years. During that time, he maintained the Division through good times and bad and has ensured the Division remained vibrant with an interesting monthly program of activities for members. Today, the Division is well known for being welcoming and friendly — a direct result of Grant's efforts.

**Mark Cowles (North Central Region)** — Mark served as Division clerk and newsletter editor for more than 20 years, keeping the Division both organized and interesting. In fact, when he turned in his Achievement Program "Association Volunteer" paperwork several years ago, he had almost 400 time units accrued!

**Walt Liles (Southeast Region)** — Walt is the current Piedmont Division Superintendent, but has also served as Director of Operations, Director-At-Large, Chair of the Volunteer Committee, and Chair of the Raffle Layout Committee.

He established the Division's Facebook Group (currently hosting more than 200 members), managed the construction of a Division raffle layout, and has presented dozens of clinics, as well as opening his home layout to tours for more than five years.

**Ben Sevier (Pacific Southwest Region)** — Ben has co-chaired four Regional conventions hosted by the San Diego Division. During that same time period, he was also editor of the Division's newsletter. He served several terms as Division Superintendent, Clerk, and Paymaster. He's also been Region President, Convention Chair, Vice President, and newsletter editor. Ben is currently serving as NMRA National IT Chair.

**Jack Dziadul (Mid-Eastern Region)** — To say that Jack is a well-known figure in the MER is an understatement. Jack has served as an officer in the Carolina Piedmont Division, as well as being a director for the Region. And because he's no stranger to hard work, Jack even quit his Director office to serve as chairman for the 2016 Mid-Eastern Region convention.

**Roy F. Hord (Mid-Central Region)** — Roy has been a Division 7 member for more than 40 years, and during that time has served as Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent, newsletter editor and publisher, Division trustee, Regional convention treasurer and registrar (multiple times), National Convention registrar, as well as serving in a wide variety of other assignments. He's been described as "the oil that keeps the Division's various moving parts working together with as little friction as possible, and the glue that binds the leadership together in their roles as keepers of the Division."

**Shirley Sample (Pacific Northwest Region)** — For more than 20 years, Shirley has been the "go to" person when something needed to happen in the Fifth Division. Shirley has been at the center of virtually every Division activity to the point where, if something good happens, you can be sure that Shirley is in the middle of that success.



## 2017 October

From getting others to help with activities to personally stepping up to fill critical vacancies, Shirley is always there.

### Alex Huerres (European Region)

— Although Alex is currently the Superintendent of the Iberian Division in Spain, he was actually active many years before the beginning of the European Region and was extremely instrumental in getting the Region founded. He's also the administrator of the Division's Facebook page and is omnipresent with a Division booth at local train shows in Spain.

### Doug Wagner (Pacific Coast Region)

— Doug may not always be the one in charge, but he is always the one doing the work. Whether it's layout tours, finding venues, doing paperwork, or sending emails, he's always there. No matter where the Division's meetings are, Doug is always in attendance, and many members have said that they would never have been active in the PCR if not for Doug's support and friendship.

### Richard Seymour (Midwest Region)

— Rich served 10 years on the Division Board (nine as Chief Clerk) and was the Registrar for the Midwest Region's "Milepost 50" convention and the "Highball to Indy" 2016 National Convention, where he also served as webmaster. He photographs all meets and activities, produces maps for Division layout tours, helps with the Division website, and ensures all other Board members receive recognition each year. He often finishes a job before anyone thinks to ask him.

### Martin Boyask (British Region)

— Martin has been a well-respected BR member who edited the Region's magazine, *Roundhouse*, since 1983. With his hard work and leadership, he has taken the magazine from a basic duplicated typewritten newsletter to a full-color magazine published six times a year. Most members agree that the Region has relied on his independent, unbiased viewpoint for decades. Regrettably, Martin passed away only a few months before these award winners were announced.

**Chris Lyon (Niagara Frontier Region)** — Chris was chosen for his complete selflessness. He's always prepared to share information and is always assisting other members in the construction of their layouts. He's presented innumerable clinics at simple get-togethers and has even given his clinics at members' houses to help ensure that the layout owner picks up the proper

skills. In addition, he presents videos of his clinics on YouTube.

### Peter Watson (Northeastern Region)

— Few model railroaders in the NER have had the impact that Pete Watson has had. Pete has served the HUB Division in numerous capacities and roles, including President, Vice-President, Office Manager, Clerk, and BOD member. He was a founding member of the Division's modular group, has served on many of the Division's committees, and has been chairman of the Division's annual Spring TRAINing show for the past eight years.

### Donovan Lewis (Sunshine Region)

— Donovan has provided extraordinary service and dedication to the office of Division Superintendent. Members know he's one who can be counted on for wise counsel and is a true visionary and superior leader. Division members agree that he's made the NMRA a better place for modelers.

### Dave Lamberts (Lone Star Region)

— Dave has served as Director for Division 5 for more years than most can count. In addition, he chaired two highly successful LSR conventions and has served as the Photography Chair for the Region, taking thousands of photos of all the LSR conven-

tions for many years, as well as photos for the Region's website.

### Al Hovey (Rocky Mountain Region)

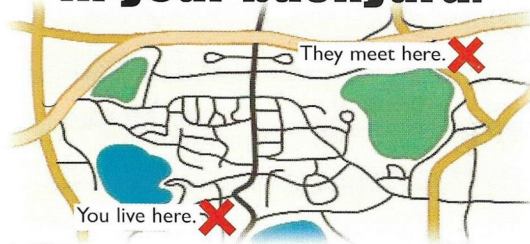
— Al has been a very active member of the Rio Grande Division of the RMR, serving in a number of positions. He recently was the chairperson for one of the Region's most successful conventions and has actively served on the RMR Board of Directors, including Vice-President. Al has worked diligently with Youth in Model Railroading and has delivered presentations all over the Region promoting the youth.

### Larry Alfred (Mid-Continent Region)

— Larry has been actively involved with the NMRA since the early 1980s. He's served in dozens of roles for the Turkey Creek Division and has proven himself a true leader. Larry was actively involved with both the 1984 and 1998 Kansas City National Conventions, as well as organizing the MCoR's Kansas conventions in Olathe in 2003 and Overland Park in 2013. Not a year goes by that Larry isn't active in both the Division and Region.

On behalf of the entire National Model Railroad Association, we'd like to congratulate these 18 worthy recipients. It truly is *you* who make the NMRA the great organization it is. *Thank you for your service!*

## Meet a bunch of modelers in your backyard.



When you're a National Model Railroad Association member, you're never very far away from fellow model railroaders because you're automatically a member of your local Division. There are over 150 of them all across the country! Some hold monthly or quarterly meetings. Some sponsor swap meets. Some take tours to factories and prototype facilities. Some do it all and more.

But one thing they all have in common: they like model railroads...and model railroaders.

Visit [www.nmra.org](http://www.nmra.org) to find your local Division. Then meet up with some of your best friends, right outside your door.



**We make it even more fun.**

[www.nmra.org](http://www.nmra.org)  
4 2 3 - 8 9 2 - 2 8 4 6



## 2017 November

**Gary Lee earned Master Model Railroader 598.**

**Warner Swarner earned Master Model Railroader 599.**

## 2017 December

**Pastor John Siegel earned Master Model Railroader 601. John is the second person to achieve his MMR with 3-rails! Ronald Ralph Rise MMR #167 was first.**

**A quote from John: *“What many experienced modelers found curious about me is that I never gave up 3-rail operation. It may be 3-rail, but I strived to make my structures and the rail cars I built to match O-scale.”***

## 2018 January

### Present

**A**s a child, I could hardly wait for the next special occasion: birthday, Christmas, Easter. My innocent mind's imagination went wild with anticipation, almost overwhelmingly so at times. I counted down the months, weeks, and days, my thoughts consumed by what that event might bring to add delight to my life. I'll admit my reasons were pretty selfish, but hey, I was a kid! Almost without fail, the big day arrived, and my overblown expectations lead to disappointment. Not that I wasn't grateful — I was — but I *really, really* wanted that pony (never mind that we lived in the city).

*“Well,” I thought, “only 364 days until my next birthday!”*

That's me — always thinking ahead. Let me tell ya, it's not as great as it's cracked up to be. For instance, I'm constantly unbuckling my seatbelt before the car even enters the garage (let alone comes to a stop!). In my mind, I'm already inside (be it the store, home, or office), thinking about what to do next. It wasn't until recently that I embraced the concept of “living in the moment.” I'm trying to be fully present and enjoy what (and especially who) is in front of me — tomorrow isn't guaranteed.

Sure, it's important to make future plans, but I'm striving to do so without losing sight of the present. I need to do this now more than ever. Two major projects are coming to a head this year: The NMRA National Convention and the completion of our St. Louis Division layout. We still have a lot of hard work to do on both projects (in addition to fulfilling our other commitments), and I

### Observation Car

NMRA Magazine Editor Cinthia Priest

don't want to lose track of today by constantly having my head buried in those tasks. I need to take a step back regularly and appreciate the day I have been given.

And I did just that on November 18, 2017. The layout reached a significant milestone that day — the entire main line was operational. I had the privilege of running the first train across the entire layout.

I had a blast! I hadn't operated in a very long time, and it meant a lot to my husband that I stepped away from the computer without hesitation and took part in this momentous occasion. (It's not easy for me to stop working.)

No one else can say they ran the first train across the layout. That honor is mine — and, yes, it *exceeded* all my expectations. Lesson learned.

Enjoy today — it's a present too!



Above: Cinthia enjoyed running the inaugural train across the St. Louis Division of the Santa Fe — a 25-minute run one way! — Stephen Priest, MMR photo

*Cinthia Priest*



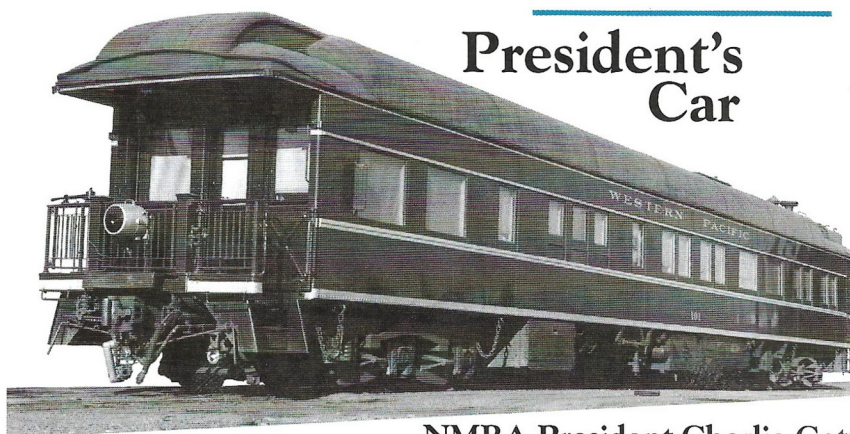
## Happy 2018

**I**t is amazing that another year is upon us! So let me start by wishing each and every one of you a very Happy New Year with hopes it will be a year of great model railroading. We at the NMRA are dedicated this year — and every year — toward the goal of making model railroading more enjoyable, more relevant, and more important. In this column, I would like to have a frank discussion of our hopes and goals for this New Year.

The year 2018 is the best year for model railroading in history. The hobby is vibrant, technically sophisticated, and more fun than ever before. A comparison of the model railroads shown in the commercial press as compared to those of just a few years back reveals how far we have come. The Pelle Soeborgs of our hobby have shown us all how to improve realism. Never before have there been better products, better technology, or better methods to bring unparalleled realism to our model railroads. And in my opinion, never before has the NMRA been better prepared to embrace these new realities. We are working hard to improve your enjoyment of the hobby through updated Standards, new programs, and increased opportunities. We face challenges but nothing we cannot handle.

We recently announced the new Partnership Program — a fancy title for what is really a member discount benefit. An increasing number of vendors, museums, hobby shops, and railroad attractions offer NMRA members an exclusive discount based solely on membership. These discounts can be substantial and, sometimes, in addition to any discounts offered generally. From Micro-Mark to Monster Modelworks, being a member offers an economic advantage. I hope this effort will continue and expand in 2018.

We implemented the *TURNTABLE*, — a monthly feature highlighting the



## President's Car

**NMRA President Charlie Getz**

best modeling internet sites and places. Exhaustively vetted by our staff of talented volunteers, these sites present tried-and-true techniques, ideas, and features to enhance your modeling pleasure. This effort will continue as long as our dedicated volunteers continue their efforts.

The Model Railroad Directory is a reality and also continues to grow. Coordinator Phil Piet is systematically expanding the Directory to include more willing members, clubs, and even hobby shops offering NMRA discounts. This will not happen overnight, but I am hopeful that during 2018 you will see this effort become even more useful. You will find this Directory essential for locating places and people to visit on your travels.

The Gallery Exhibit at the California State Railroad Museum will be under construction shortly, and I hope it will open in 2018. After almost a decade of delay and some uncertainty, we are finally in high gear. We need your help and support, and I believe this ambitious effort will dominate the year. Similarly, we expect the Library move to proceed smoothly and be finalized early in the year. So forgive the fund-raising letters you will no doubt receive for finishing this great project, but without your continued support, the Gallery Exhibit would never take place.

The Executive Handbook (EHB) re-write is well underway and offers a chance to rethink how we do business

and what we can improve. Our goal is to simplify and streamline many of the procedures that have built up over the years. For example, we are considering holding one of our two annual meetings digitally to save costs. Each year the Board of Directors meets twice in person and such meetings can be costly. Though we try to keep costs down, it does get expensive to move and house 30 to 40 participants. Holding a virtual real-time electronic meeting makes sense but a variety of technical and pragmatic challenges must be overcome. We had hoped to try such a meeting next month with the Mid-Year, which will be held in Atlanta. Atlanta is home to or reachable by a large number of participants plus a reasonably priced destination for travel. But we decided to wait due to some issues that arose requiring a face-to-face meeting. Electronic meetings pose both advantages and disadvantages, so one day we will see if holding one live meeting and one electronic each year is feasible. Expect to see more about this in the coming months.

We continue to re-examine our excellent *NMRA MAGAZINE* and whether there might be a better way to get this into your hands at a lesser cost. The answer may be “no,” but we will try. Further, we have slowly embraced social media. Slowly, because of volunteer limits, but also because of a genuine debate on the proper role of the NMRA in this venue. Social media, whether Twitter, Facebook, or other platforms, is the



portal to younger generations. There is no question that the potential of this media is unlimited — but so are the pitfalls. Exactly what is our message? Who is our audience and, more importantly, what are their expectations? I belong to a number of sites engaged in discussions about the hobby. Often, those discussions themselves are the clear focus of the participants, not the subject matter discussed. We have all experienced questions at a clinic that are so off the mark you wonder if the questioner is serious. Well, that happens in social media also and occasionally days are consumed debating the number of angels on a pin.

So if we have a larger presence on social media, we obviously need to do so in a way that promotes the hobby we enjoy, and there are many ways to do so without dissolving into meaningless banter. We have so many talented modelers that I have no doubt we could be a place to learn all about the hobby. However, this requires effort and volunteers. So, I hope 2018 will see us make a bigger splash in this wonderful new communication world.

This year's highlight will no doubt be the NMRA National Convention in Kansas City. I have spoken to so many members who are excited about the prospects of this railroad-friendly town! From "the Bottoms" to the restored Union Station to some of the best layouts you will ever visit to mind-boggling clinics, this truly will be a convention not to miss. Now, it is a tad early to make hotel reservations, but very soon you should do so. Above all, register for the convention (which you can do now), and if you think this one is the last worth attending, I say not. In 2019, we will celebrate the 150th Anniversary of Promontory in Salt Lake City, Utah. And to double down, 2022 is in the UK, with some excellent choices before then in St. Louis (2020) and Santa Clara, California (2021). NMRA membership allows you to at-

tend any and all of these events, which are the best weeks of intense model railroading you will ever enjoy.

The year 2018 also brings a dues increase, including a modest increase for our overseas members. We hate to raise dues and have avoided doing so for years. But few things in life get cheaper over time, and the cost of administering the NMRA is not immune to cost increases. What expenses we do control, we do our best to keep in line. But we do not control utilities, rent, postage, and the overall costs of doing business. One of the reform measures voted by the membership was a provision that allows dues increases only when the cost of living allows. This is one of those rare instances. We thank you for sticking with us and especially to those overseas who do not enjoy many of the benefits taken for granted by North American members.

And this is a presidential election year! This spring, you will elect new Officers and Board members. Our Nominations Chair, Tony Koester, and the committees overseas worked hard to find candidates willing and qualified to run. We would love to have multiple candidates for each office, but sometimes that is difficult to accomplish. Above all, please vote — the winners of this election will determine our future.

My future marks a return to "plain ol' member" status (to use a Whit Towers' phrase) this August in Kansas City. It has been a wonderful six-year run and hopefully has resulted in some good things for the NMRA. As such, 2018 is a special year for both the NMRA and yours truly.

Whether you agree or disagree with me, we always welcome your thoughts, insights, and comments. As I always say: those are my thoughts; what are yours?





**2018 January**

## **Midge Reber Passes**

**From Joe Kurilec, MMR: I recently learned that my good friend Midge Reber passed away on September 7, 2017. Midge was the Office Manager for the NMRA after the legendary Bob Bast, Canton, OH.**

**Midge was the Office Manager in Indianapolis from 1976 to 1982 when it moved into the new HQ building in Chattanooga, TN.**

**We became friends sometime in the early 1970s. Back then, Midge, Col. Johnie Reid and Dean Freytag, MMR, all helped me pursue my MMR dreams.**



**Almost every MCR Regional Convention and National Convention found us at those wonderful hotel roomparties. Midge was always a great hostess! Her smile and “down home” style will always be remembered. Goodbye my friend.--Joe Kurilec.**



**2018 January**

**Mathew (Mat) Thompson earned Master Model Railroader 595.**

**2018 February**

**Joe Gelmini, MMR Passes**



## Joe Gelmini, 1947-2017: Leaving a Legacy

**A**s I sit here at my computer, searching the far reaches of my mind for a witty or inspiring topic on which to write my editorial, I find myself at a loss — both figuratively and literally. My personal objective for this space is to entertain, educate, and perhaps from time to time cleverly present my prose in such a way as to elucidate some of the hidden benefits of belonging to this hobby organization. Since I believe model railroading *is* fun, I strive to focus on the positive — you know, the staging-track-is-half-full kind of thinking. Yet, here I am, feeling both sad and empty. Why? A dear friend, mentor, and fine gentleman model railroader has passed away: Eastern District Director Joe Gelmini, MMR.

“Papa Gel,” as most knew him, had a special bond with our family, especially with my son Joel. The two of them earned sequential Master Model Railroaders (Joe being MMR 502 and Joel earning MMR 503). Ever since then, Joe always addressed Joel as “503.” Joe, in fact, had quite the influence on Joel getting his MMR — the two of them discussing their latest projects and tactics on how to earn Merit Awards at every convention. After the two of them earned their MMRs, Joe then focused on Joel getting his Eagle, making regular inquiries as to his progress through the years. When I posted on Facebook that Joel had reached this milestone this past December, Joe posted, “Way to go Joel!!” and

## Observation Car

NMRA Magazine Editor Cinthia Priest

we all read it just as he would have said it in person. We could even imagine his warm smile and face beaming with pride. Joel so respected Papa Gel that he called to ask if Joe would be his escort for his Eagle Scout Court of Honor. Unfortunately, Joel called just shortly after Joe’s passing.

Joe (and the rest of the Gelmini family for that matter) made such a huge impression on our family. And you know what? We have the NMRA to thank for introducing us oh so many years ago. We would not have known him otherwise. So, yes, I am at a loss for words, but isn’t that how it always goes? We seldom take time to let the ones we care about know what a positive influence they have had on our lives, enriching them beyond measure.

Joe’s positive influence, encouraging words, actions, and relationships didn’t begin or end with the Priests. Joe embodied the term “servant leader,” putting the needs of others first and helping people develop and perform as highly as possible, no matter their goal. Over the years, Joe served the NMRA in various leadership and volunteer roles in the Piedmont Division, the Southeastern Region, and National. He worked tirelessly on initiatives with the goal of advancing the hobby and sustaining the NMRA well into the future. He had a passion for railroading and living life to the fullest. I, for one, am better for having known him.



## The Best of the NMRA

In many ways, this is the easiest column I have ever written, but in many other ways, it is the most difficult. Periodically, VP-Special Projects Gerry Leone produces a table of benefits of belonging to the NMRA. Friendships are not listed but, frankly, should be, and not only listed but also screamed from the rooftops. When asked, a large number of our members cite friendships as the number one benefit of NMRA membership. If you ask most prospective members what they believe the advantage of joining might be, friendship would probably rank last. Our talented recruiters often mention that it is difficult to convince these prospective members that the people they will meet in the NMRA will prove to be the number one reason they will one day cite as the greatest benefit of joining our organization. So, we have this conundrum where we sell the NMRA for every reason except the one that turns out to be the best reason: the people you will meet.

Ask yourself a simple question. What do you believe is the number one reason to be an NMRA member? If you have been a member for any length of time, you probably will agree that it is the people you meet who may become the most important aspect of your hobby. Perhaps if you are a new member, you would not agree with that statement, because you have not been in the organization long enough to form those friendships and attachments. I freely admit that recruiting on the slogan of "Join the NMRA and meet your new best friend" is doomed to failure since few will believe it. Yet, all our polls show it to be true. Boy, it sure has been for me.

So what is the "Best of the NMRA?" It is our members. And as I approach the end of my tenure as President, it is increasingly clear that our members are the backbone of what we offer. The unvarnished truth is that you will never



President's Car

### NMRA President Charlie Getz

meet better folks than you will meet in the NMRA. Want proof?

Look at past members, which include a "who's who" of model railroaders. Al Kalmbach and Bill Walthers were founding members. John Allen, Paul Shimida, Whit Towers, Paul Mallery, Bill McClanahan, Cliff Robinson, Linn Westcott, and Hal Carstens are just a few NMRA pioneers. Today, just about anyone well-known in the hobby is an NMRA member, including Tony Koester, Pelle Søeborg, Allen McClelland, Bruce Chubb, and Gil Freitag. I could easily name scores more.

Only the NMRA could create the Master Model Railroader program. Since the beginning of the Achievement Program in approximately 1960, slightly more than 600 have earned this honor. Legend has it that John Allen originated the idea but refused MMR #1 when offered. The MMRs are among the most talented and nicest members we have. And they are dedicated to helping other members improve their skills.

I am especially proud of our female MMRs. From former Atlantic Director and British Region member Kathy Millatt to renowned narrow gauge modeler Mary Miller (wife of another MMR, Bill Miller), these modelers superbly prove gender equality does exist within the NMRA. At the NTS, MMR Leslie Eaton, who really is a rocket scientist, wows the crowds with demonstrations of her skills, especially

in nanotechnology. Hey, if she can teach yours truly to create a micro-circuit that works, she can teach anyone!

Clark Kooning MMR, our VP-Admin, runs "Modeling with the Masters," which has proven wildly successful and is a highlight of any Regional or National Convention. In Orlando, I was thrilled to see full session after full session of members learning how to build laser-cut kits or bridges or scenery or assemble white metal kits. This program is true hands-on training. NMRA folks are tops in training as shown by the more than 100 clinics on file on the Member's Only page. This benefit illustrates the best of the NMRA because it is directly provided by our best: our members.

Some time back, we ran an advertising campaign suggesting if you were "serious" about model railroading, you should join the NMRA. Boy, did we get a fierce reaction from non-members decrying the "insult" that because they were not members, they were not "serious" in their interest. Okay, but I stand by the statement. With a Who's-Who of modelers, the NMRA offers access unknown elsewhere. At National Conventions, I often see members encounter Tony Koester or Allen McClelland, finding them very approachable. And, yes, by mentioning names, I run the risk of annoying the many great names not mentioned. Mea culpa! I am just making the point that



you cannot beat the quality of members we have.

As President, it has been my great fortune to attend conventions in every region (except our newest, the European Region). I can report unequivocally that you meet the nicest folks in the NMRA, hands down! That goes double for our overseas Regions: the AR, ER, and BR. Tours are arranged, and friends you never previously met give their time and local knowledge to make your visit memorable just because you are an NMRA member. This is best illustrated by the story I related a few months back when I received an email from a Colorado member in London wondering if there was anything of railroad interest to see. Within 24 hours, he was whisked off to a train show, layouts, and made new friends — all because of the NMRA. Similarly, a BR member, who is also a taxi driver, gave us a memorable day touring London. In Copenhagen, a well-known modeler entertained Margaret and I, including dinner at his home, simply because of the NMRA membership we shared.

Our new Model Railroad Directory is written proof of this wonderful benefit that provides access to our members wherever you travel (and if you have not listed yourself, please consider doing so). The Best of the NMRA is us — each and every one of us. From the volunteers who keep your Division humming to the Regional folks behind the convention you enjoy to the surprisingly small number of staff at the National level, we are so fortunate to attract and retain such wonderful folks.

Still skeptical? May I suggest you come to Kansas City this August for the National NMRA Convention, to be held August 5–12? There, you will meet the Best of the NMRA and learn a lot about our hobby. This convention will be huge given the excellent quality level of the layouts in the area and the central location of Kansas City. Don't

get me started on all the railroad sites and attractions. Union Station is fully refurbished and superb. My favorite has to be the "Bottoms," an industrial district that is also home to a great hobby shop. Like to eat? KC BBQ is world famous, though few agree on which of the many providers is the best.

Speaking of great members, I was sorry to accept the resignation some months back of Kathy Millatt, MMR, our Atlantic Director. She felt that her duties for the 2022 National Convention plus her new full-time job were just too much in addition to being Atlantic Director. We wish Kathy well. After consultation with both the British and European Regions, I appointed Mike Arnold as her replacement. Mike will join us at midyear, and I'm sure will do an excellent job. Kathy brought great energy and enthusiasm to the job, making many significant contributions. Fortunately, this will allow Kathy more time to work on the 2022 National NMRA Convention to be held in the UK. That convention promises to be very exciting and another opportunity to validate my hypothesis about the Best of the NMRA. Thanks, Kathy, for all that you have done for the NMRA and for all you continue to do.

This month, we hold our mid-year BOD meeting in Atlanta. I will report on any significant actions in future columns. Until then, allow me to thank you for being a member and, thereby, for being the Best of the NMRA.

Whether you agree or disagree with me, we always welcome your thoughts, insights, and comments. As I always say: those are my thoughts; what are yours?



**Mark Malmkar earned Master Model Railroader 604.**



## 2018 April **Bill Miller, MMR & Bob Gardner, MMR Pass Away**

Weston, owner of The Bedford Train Store, Bedford, Massachusetts. I began using the Dynatrol system in the mid-1970s for my HO model railroad until I converted to a Lenz DCC system.

*L. Richard Wenzel*

### **William H. (Bill) Miller, MMR July 22, 1939 – January 29, 2018**

**O**n January 29th, the model railroad hobby lost one of its most enthusiastic proponents, Bill (Tiger Bob) Miller. Bill was a fount of knowledge about our hobby and could talk for hours about almost any facet of it. Most often he spoke of his favorite things: railroad history, scenery, scratch-building, and his much-loved Colorado & Southern. This interest stemmed from the time he spent in Colorado, both professionally and as a hobbyist, researching



*Above: Bill Miller, MMR*

the narrow gauge railroads and the C&S, in particular.

In partnership with his MMR wife Mary, he developed the idea to build a railroad that the prototype planned but never built: the C&S Ohio Creek Extension. The resulting On3 railroad models an area from Gunnison to Floresta via Baldwin and Kebler Pass with a branch to Ruby. As a team, their skills combined well. Bill's well-developed skills in scenery, scratchbuilding, and rolling stock highly complimented Mary's abilities with trackwork and locomotive construction. The result is a superb model railroad that has been widely featured in the hobby press. It is one of the few railroads that operates as well as it looks, and as you may have seen, it is gorgeous. Operating under the timetable/train order system, it frequently operates for months at a time without so much as a derailment.

As a modeler, Bill won many awards both nationally and regionally and was recognized by the NMRA as a Master Model Railroader. He loved to share his

modeling knowledge and photographic skills and has been widely published in the model press. His byline has appeared often over the last 40 years in *Model Railroader*, *The Narrow Gauge and Short Line Gazette*, *Railroad Model Craftsman* and the *NMRA MAGAZINE*.

In addition to a keen interest in model railroading, Bill had an impact in a much wider arena. A proud member of the Screen Actors Guild, he was the top radio "morning man," in the Baltimore/Washington market known as "Tiger Bob Raleigh." His long and extremely successful career in radio was topped off with two Country Music Awards recognizing his excellence.

Bill also had a wide range of personal interests. An avid collector of old movies and radio memorabilia, you would never want to challenge him at trivia. In his younger days, Bill spent years of weekends riding the rodeo circuit throughout the U.S. and Canada, performing in such disparate venues as the New Jersey rodeos, the Calgary Stampede, Denver Cattle Show, and many, many more. Bull riding was his favorite event, and he had the scars to prove it. A long-time devoted fan of the Baltimore Orioles, his wife and son even purchased a treasured pair of his favorite seats from Municipal Stadium as a gift when Oriole Park at Camden Yards was opened.

Radio personality, rodeo rider, CMA winner, dedicated U.S. Marine, Orioles fan, historian, railroad modeler — Bill was all these things and more. He is survived by his loving wife, Mary Synowiec Miller and one son, Michael Marc Miller. His modeling friends and family will long remember and

sorely miss his outstanding sense of humor and warm, willing friendship.

*Bob Charles*

### **Bob Gardner:**

**July 12, 1927 to January 12, 2018**

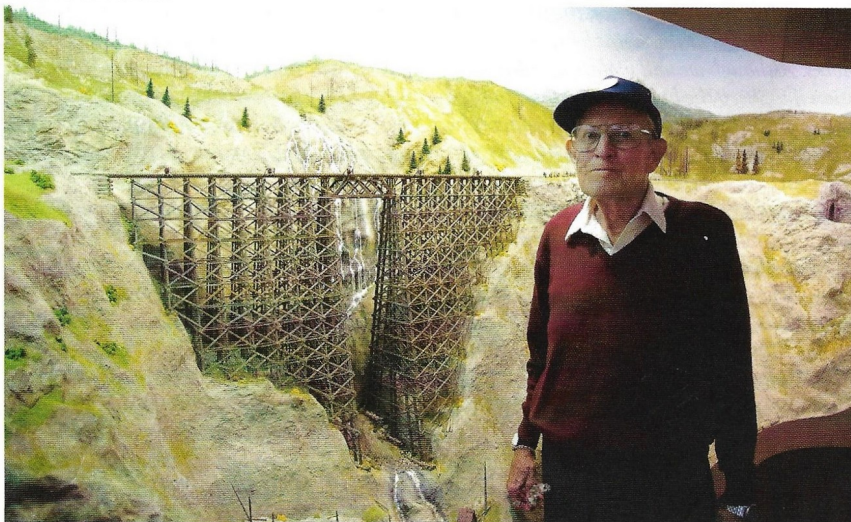
**O**n January 12, 2018, we lost Bob Gardner at 90½ years. Bob was a very kind man and enjoyed life to the fullest. He was also very gentle, always willing to help, very intelligent, had a great sense of humor and always participated in everything from camping to attending NMRA events and train meets.

After graduating from UBC, Bob started out in Winnipeg and was part of the Model Railway Club there. Then he spent many years in Lethbridge as Chief Engineer at Lethbridge Iron Works. His wife Von did all sorts of things with the Cubs and Scouts, including campouts.

After retirement and four children, Bob and Von retired to Salmon Arm where they built a beautiful log home, and he built an award-winning layout in the new basement. He joined SAMRA (Salmon Arm Model Railway Association) where he helped with many projects. He will be missed by many and particularly the SAMRA members and from our camping outings to Juniper Beach Provincial Park where late at night he would say, "Let's have another thimbleful" (Scotch). We are much better off for having known him, and we will cherish his memories.

*Gary Hazell*

*Below: Bob Gardner*





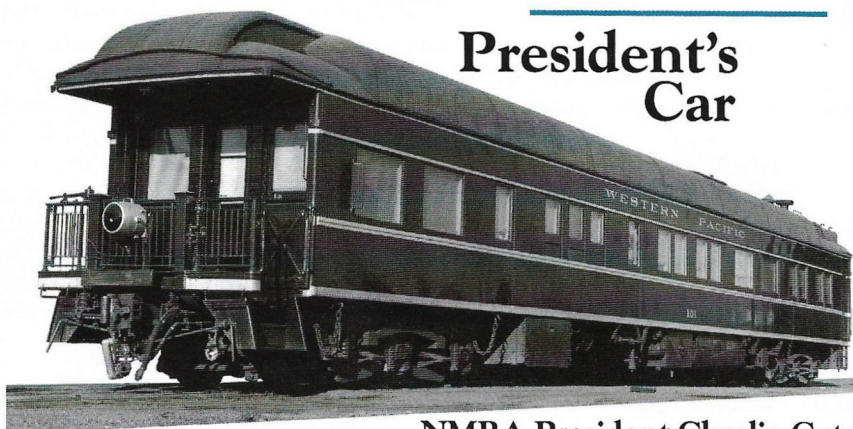
## Our Tinplate Heritage

**I**mmediately above this column is the official NMRA Mission Statement: "The NMRA advances the worldwide scale model railroad community through education and standards as well as advocacy and fellowship."

In this column, I would like to address the reference to "scale" in our Mission Statement by acknowledging our history and debt to tinplate, often referred to as "toy trains." Yes, we are a scale model railroad organization, but that also means we are neither hostile to nor unwelcoming to those who are in the tinplate or toy train side of our shared hobby.

Indeed, it is a shared hobby. Model railroading embraces many aspects and interests ranging from live steam to Lego and just about anything in between. There was a heated debate when we formulated our Mission Statement as part of the Long Range Plan, which led to the adoption of reforms more than a decade ago. Some felt the use of the term "scale" was off-putting and would limit our appeal to the model railroad community. Others asserted that the NMRA has always been focused on scale and to imply otherwise was misleading. I strongly sided with the latter position.

When the NMRA began in 1935, our focus was scale and on adopting standards for the nascent scale manufacturing community. Tinplate manufacturers Lionel, Dorfan, and Ives, among others, had been in business for decades by 1935 but scale manufacturers such as Scale-Craft and Walthers were relatively new. The 75 folks organizing the NMRA came from the world of scale publications and manufacturing. Scale models were highlighted in early issues of *The Model Railroader* and *The Craftsman* (as they were then known). Ads in those magazines offered primarily scale products. As our exhibit at the California State Railroad Museum (CSRM) will highlight, the 1930s saw the rise of scale model railroading as a hobby, leading to the birth of the NMRA.



President's Car

NMRA President Charlie Getz

But our history and focus on scale does not mean we are hostile or unwelcoming to those in the tinplate hobby. Far from it! We even have a three-rail Master Model Railroader. But the reality is that the NMRA does not tailor its programs or educational activities toward the needs of the tinplate community. Looking at the clinics from past National Conventions demonstrates that while many are adaptable to tinplate, most are geared toward the scale side of the hobby; certainly, our contest is, as are model railroad tours and other features. We have three-rail members and appreciate the excellent work done by many three-rail modelers. Truly, some three-rail layouts, mixing tinplate with scale elements (called "Hi-Rail") can be as realistic as their scale cousins.

But to be honest and not misleading, our focus is on scale trains, not tinplate. Fortunately, there are excellent organizations focused on the tinplate community. For S, there is the National Association of S Gaugers (NASG). For O, the TCA (Train Collectors Association) and the TTOS (Toy Train Operators Society) offer programs and resources geared toward tinplate. Both of those organizations boldly state in their mission statements that they serve the "toy train" community. I am aware of no controversy that TCA and TTOS need service the scale community as well. Yet, occasionally, I receive complaints that the NMRA is "hostile" toward those in the tinplate community and needs to offer programs for that community. No, we are not hos-

tile, but we need not replicate what TCA and TTOS so effectively offer. As noted earlier, NASG does serve both.

We also have a good relationship with the NASG, TCA, and TTOS. TCA has been most gracious in including the NMRA in annual planning meetings. We have tried to send a representative when so invited. Yours truly is a charter subscriber to *Classic Toy Trains*, the premier Kalmbach magazine geared toward the tinplate community. I have enjoyed every issue and just finished the latest special edition issued honoring their 30th anniversary. Do I model or collect tinplate? No. But I also do not model in N scale or traction. Yet, I appreciate both. Heck, there is nothing in model railroading I do not appreciate. (Yes, cynics, that includes operations!)

Tinplate is where many in the scale community began. Especially for our demographic, often the story of our journey in scale model railroading began with a Lionel or American Flyer toy train as a kid. As I have related before, I was one of those quintessential children of the 1950s whose parents presented a Lionel outfit and some accessories for Christmas. All I have of that set is a blurry 8 mm film of it racing around the Christmas tree and memories of the glowing crossing tender's shanty with figure popping out, madly waving a lantern as the train roared by. For some reason, that set never grabbed my interest and sadly, it was discarded years later. But for many of you, that Lionel or AF outfit led to scale trains down the road. For others,



it led to more tinplate. Truth be told, the public more often than not still equates model railroading with Lionel around the Christmas tree, thanks to effective Lionel advertising.

So we have a connection, and debt owed, to tinplate for introducing tens of thousands to model railroading and leading many to scale model trains. Those remaining in tinplate are happily collecting the trains of their youth and rare variants of products. I always enjoy the stories of pre-production samples or unusual variations of production models in *Classic Toy Trains* or *S Gaugian*. The scale side does not usually emphasize collecting, although some of us do collect. There is now a White River Publication, *HO Collector*, for this developing interest.

One scale that has seamlessly integrated scale and tinplate is S. Both *S Gaugian* and the *Dispatch*, the official magazine of the NASG, interchangeably feature tinplate and scale articles. I read the *Dispatch*, and occasionally *S Gaugian*, enjoying both. I marvel at how they celebrate their AF heritage while featuring the best in S-scale model railroading. Manufacturers often offer cars and locomotives in either scale or tinplate versions. American Flyer products are often referred to as “heritage models.” The annual NASG convention highlights both scale and tinplate.

As part of the upcoming Gallery Exhibit at CSRM, we were asked to please explain to the visitor exactly what “scale” is. It is a term foreign to most of the general populace as I discovered during an open house at MMR Bob Brown’s wonderful On3 layout. Most non-model railroad visitors were impressed but confused by what they saw, asking what it was. When I said O scale, they were confused by the “scale” reference until I explained the term. At CSRM, the Sefton Toy Train exhibit has been a popular feature for years and beautifully presents the best in tinplate, including impressive oversized reproductions of Lionel accessories. We hope

the “Magic of Scale Model Railroading” accomplishes the same for the scale side of the hobby. But first, we must explain to the visitor what they are seeing, and that means an explanation of scale. Once we open the Exhibit, we hope a museum visitor will be able to appreciate the best of tinplate and scale model railroading.

Another connection with the tinplate hobby is our common challenge of attracting new hobbyists and our increasing average age. The tinplate community is also concerned about their future and whether newer generations not traditionally exposed to toy trains at Christmas will nevertheless become collectors. *Classic Toy Trains* has featured columns speculating about the future, but like me, they are not predicting the end of the hobby. (Despite internet claims to the contrary, I do not assert or believe model railroading is dying! But to ignore our aging populace is to ignore the canary in the mine.) Whether collecting tinplate becomes an interest for newer generations remains to be seen. Tinplate and scale share an interest in ensuring a healthy hobby for future generations. Most local train shows comingle scale and toy train elements, and it always strikes me as appropriate to do so. For despite being a scale-oriented organization, don’t we all appreciate the many contributions made by tinplate? And kids love trains, whether scale or tinplate. So long life to both branches of our wonderful hobby, and let us both enjoy the journey.

The NMRA National Convention is fast approaching, and this August, Kansas City will be hosting the premier model railroad event of the year. We are literally but a few months away from this wonderful week of intense model railroading in a rail-oriented location. Sign up today, make your travel plans, and prepare for a satisfying experience.

The election of NMRA officers was recently completed. We hope all of you qualified to do so voted despite some minor glitches. Results will be announced shortly. We are blessed to have such strong



**2018 May**

## **OUR TINPLATE HERITAGE Cont.**

leaders volunteering to run, and regardless of the results, they all deserve our appreciation and thanks. I am down to a few months in my tenure as President and will review what together we have accomplished over the past

six years in future columns. The NMRA remains strong, relevant, and a leader in the hobby. Thanks for being a member.

Whether you agree or disagree with me, we welcome your thoughts, insights,

and comments. As I always say — those are my thoughts; what are yours?

*Charlie*

**John H. Hemsath earned Master Model Railroader 602.**

**Ronald Christensen earned Master Model Railroader 608.**

**2018 June**

### **Hurricane Relief**

**H**urricane Harvey struck the Texas Gulf Coast last year, leaving many in the region reeling from the devastation. To lessen some of the pressure on any of the victims of this natural disaster who are members of our organization, the Cowcatcher Division of the Lone Star Region started a Hurricane Relief Fund. Thanks to the generosity of people, foundations, and companies around the world, our Division raised enough money to assist the individuals who applied for help.

In March 2018, Dick Brannan, Hurricane Relief Project Coordinator, and Cowcatcher Division Director Mike Mackey, took a trip to Houston to deliver checks to both Leslie Eaton, MMR, and Jim Lemmond. (Jim was unavailable for a photo.)



*Above: Leslie Eaton, MMR, center, receives a check for \$1,000 from Mike Mackey, MMR, Cowcatcher Division Director (left) and Dick Brannan, Hurricane Relief Project Coordinator (right) — Steve Sandifer, MMR photo*



## The CSRM Gallery Exhibit is Coming Soon and We Need Your Help

**A**lthough I have addressed this topic numerous times, almost every time I attend an NMRA local or national event, someone chides me for not “telling us what is happening with the Gallery Exhibit.” So, here is an update and a report on the Gallery Exhibit (“GE”) at the California State Railroad Museum (“CSRM”). And we could use your help. Who knows? Maybe you can be a part of this effort.

First, some history is in order. More than a decade ago, we conceived of the idea for an exhibit on scale model railroading. The purpose was simple: To attract people to our hobby, we believe you must show them what we do. *Narrow Gauge and Short Line Gazette* editor Bob Brown stated that truth some years back, and it is the foundation for this exhibit. We believe that if we show the public what our hobby is all about, we will attract a percentage of those people seeking an activity like ours. We have all witnessed the excited reaction of young children at train shows, and we hope to recreate that excitement at this exhibit for kids of all ages.

After years of looking nationwide for sites, the CSRM offered free space on its mezzanine or “gallery” level in return for our creation of exactly the kind of exhibit we had hoped to build. CSRM attracts more than 600,000 visitors annually, so this exhibit promises to attract more visitors each year than all the train shows combined attract in a year. It took almost another decade to design, refine, and attain concept and final approval for our plans. Bob Brown and other members of the Howell-Day Museum committee worked hard during those years to get to the implementation point at which we now find ourselves. And the hard work is just beginning.

As designed, the GE has three elements. First, a Gallery of inspiring mod-

els and layouts designed to impress the visitor with the unexpected nature of scale model railroading. Most people associate our hobby with Lionel around the Christmas tree, so a display of the best our hobby has to offer is a sure way to disabuse them of the toy trains at Christmas image. Secondly, a brief tour through our history is presented along with the hobby in the 21st Century, showcasing the state of the hobby today. The impressive worldwide model railroad literature will form part of this section. The last segment highlights different aspects of the hobby, including a display on the NMRA, a layout under construction, a typical workbench, and information on how to get involved in the hobby.

We felt this design was not only interesting, but also told the story well. Years ago, we selected a fabricator, DisplayWorks, after obtaining bids from three potential contractors. In the intervening years, DisplayWorks became Activate. That company remains committed to this project and has met with us on site to review the design. Having an outside firm assist us is not only logical given their expertise in constructing museum displays, but also beneficial in providing an outsider’s viewpoint of our exhibit. After all, this exhibit is not designed for model railroaders. Rather, it is important that it appeals to the general public. And frankly, as good as our design is, it may not reflect the best way to appeal to that general public. That is the advantage of having the assistance of an outside expert.



President's Car

### NMRA President Charlie Getz

Now, understand there will be much in this exhibit of interest to model railroaders. From *Model Railroader's* project railroad, the San Juan Central, to John Allen's original Timesaver, you will find many items of special meaning to those of us in the hobby.

After some discussions and conference call meetings, the design team from Activate recommended an overall cohesive theme to the exhibit. They were impressed by the passion and drive inherent in model railroaders. They concluded that we are model railroaders because “we have to be.” In other words, we are driven to do what we do in the hobby because of our own personal interests and an unstated desire to build or replicate whatever it is we choose to model. Think about why you are a model railroader. What makes you model the Nickel Plate road? What makes you stay up late building that station for a scene you want to complete before the upcoming convention tour comes calling? What is it that drives you each week to work on your model railroad?

Capturing that passion and drive is hard to translate to the public. In many ways, is it not the same passion an artist feels when creating a sculpture or painting? Some have equated model railroading with art, and while I may not go that far, certainly some model railroads approach art. John Allen's Gorre & Daphetid, George Sellios' Franklin & South Manchester, and Rod Stewart's Three Rivers come to mind. Something deep inside makes us do what we do, and



capturing that feeling unifies our exhibit. It has always been that way. Something made the earliest modelers capture the spirit of railroads in the 19th Century and model during the Depression when soup cans and cardboard were often the only materials available. When metal was rationed in World War II, models were built of wood and paper. As things improved, so did our models. Today, we enjoy the best in materials and techniques reflected in the sophistication of our model railroads.

This is a story worth telling and one to which the public can relate. As CSRM Director Ty Smith has said, today's museum is more than an assemblage of relics. The CSRM tells the story of the people who built and maintained the railroads and why the railroads were and remain essential to our society. Similarly, our exhibit must tell the story of our hobby through artifacts, as well as through the story of the modelers behind them. And that is when you come in!

We need your help. We'd love to have you send a head/shoulders picture with a two-liner about why you are a model railroader and what compels you to do this. Please provide your current or past work description if you would. We want to show that model railroaders come from all walks of life and diverse backgrounds. You can send those to me via email at the address in the magazine ([president@nmra.org](mailto:president@nmra.org)). Secondly, we are in need of pre-war Varney kits, locomotives, and rolling stock, as well as vintage kits from the 1950s and 1960s. If you have any you are willing to donate, please contact Bob Brown at [gazette@att.net](mailto:gazette@att.net).

Needless to say, we are all very excited about this exhibit and its potential. Out of 600,000 annual visitors, perhaps we interest only a handful. But a handful is better than none and only adds to the folks we recruit now. We hope to open the GE as early as October, although I think Spring 2019 is more realistic given the amount of work ahead of us. So, stay tuned! You will all be invited to the Grand Opening.

In my final two columns as President, I will summarize the progress we have made together over the past six years. It is my swan song as I prepare to turn over the gavel to the incoming President at Kansas City. Whatever was accomplished was accomplished as the result of the talents and dedication of a lot of members and volunteers, not me alone. I have been blessed to work with a talented group of Directors, Officers, and Department Heads. All should be given credit for the good work done over the past six years. I have said the hobby was never better, and it should also be said that the NMRA has never been better.

And speaking of Kansas City, it is not too late to register and attend our upcoming National Convention there in early August. As recent issues of the *NMRA Magazine* disclosed, the events planned are stellar, and this convention promises to be one of the best ever held. (See [www.kc2018.org](http://www.kc2018.org) for all the details.) Heck, if nothing else, come to see the peaceful transfer from one NMRA presi-



dent to another. But there are far better reasons to attend. I look forward to seeing many of you there.

For six years, I have also said that whether you agree or disagree with me, we welcome your thoughts, insights, and comments. And as I always say — those are my thoughts; what are yours?

*Charlie*



## 2018 June **STAFFORD SWAIN, MMR 98 PASSESS**

*is required, in which case, CA never seems to set up. (Grin again!)*

*Jack Hamilton, "The Tool Junkie"*

### **In Memoriam: Stafford Swain, MMR #98**

**O**ur model railway community has lost a genuine human being and a model railroader of iconic status. Stafford Swain, MMR 98, passed away on April 11, 2018, after suffering ill-health for a number of years. While those issues forced his retirement from model railroading, his unselfishly made contributions will benefit our hobby for many years.

Never shy about inviting strangers, newcomers, and long-term friends to become involved, Stafford's personable approach and freely given guidance encouraged and aided ever-so-many in our hobby. His enthusiasm and unbounded willingness to share material, details, and techniques inspired untold numbers of modelers. He willingly spent hours discussing ideas with modelers of all ages with an open mind as he shared what he knew and acknowledged the input of others, all the while raising the modeling bar. He revelled in introducing younger people to model railroading, knowing they were a key element for our future. This approach included his commenting a number of times that model railroading and its people offered considerable fellowship and pure enjoyment. Personal pride in what he did and contributed was a humbly accepted emotion.

In a perceptive and masterful manner, his Canadian National Railways Whiteshell Subdivision model railway miniaturized many key physical attributes along with the feel of the Canadian Shield east of Winnipeg late in the steam era. I was most fortunate to

be able to visit and to operate it a number of times. These circumstances were initially mind-boggling, then inspiring, and always greatly appreciated. Experiencing his model railway triggered many to initiate programs to improve their modeling to emulate something akin to his depictions.

His tireless dedication to accurately modeling the details of Canadian railway prototype elements had roots in his profession — accounting. His professional attitude carried over to his thorough and relentless pursuit of a vast array of topics while ensuring historical accuracy and completeness. His extraordinary research and analytical skills resulted in a knowledge base that set a solid foundation for prototypically accurate motive power, rolling stock, and structures, and provided leadership in creating scenery representative of the area modeled. This was compounded by his following prototype practices during operating sessions. The result was that the over-all quality aspect in model railroading spiraled upward. While the breadth of model railroading has benefited from Stafford's approach, Canadian modelers have been more blessed by his efforts.

Always so willing to contribute from the breadth of his knowledge and his vast collection of photographs and plans, Stafford provided more than 80 articles to model railroading's commercial press and to *CN Lines*, dealing with building high-quality prototype-based models. Innumerable clinics were offered on a wide range of topics that further illustrated his love for assisting others with learning about a topic. He was generous with his time, information, and techniques; his dedication to mentoring led to my earning MMR status. His collection of

material and skilled creation of masters was responsible for providing commercial companies with information for accurate copies in plastic and resin for prototype cars and for greatly improved accuracy in brass models.

Service to our hobby was commonplace for Stafford. Considerable effort was expended in successfully eliminating the Canadian federal government's 20 percent duty on model railway equipment imports. His wide range of organizational skills served many model railway-related groups. For several years, his capabilities stimulated the Winnipeg Model Railroad Club while he fulfilled the responsibilities of a number of positions. The NMRA's Thousand Lakes Region was favored by his abilities. Numerous times he was part of convention organizing committees, and then his model railway hosted attendees where he answered any and all questions from everyone. He served as a contest judge, promoting fair evaluation while promoting accuracy in modeling projects. Our 1983 National Convention — Railway Jamboree — benefited from his being the Chairman. That profitable convention saw many innovations that continue today — the pocket-fitting timetable book, a graph of daily events, colored ribbons for tours, and lapel pins for the event.

For many years, Stafford served as the heart and soul of the CN SIG as their Freight Car Editor and as Chairperson. His efforts, dedication, dreams, and initiatives included accurate paint, brass number boards, decals, and raised cab numerals for steam locomotives. His successful leadership was rewarded by growth in membership and magazine subscriptions. He was instrumental in the having the CN SIG publish "Across the Canadian Shield." Unheralded, his efforts were behind the re-invigorating of the CP SIG in 1997.

All the while, Stafford's friendship and pleasant personality overshadowed his well-deserved reputation as one of North America's most capable prototype modelers.

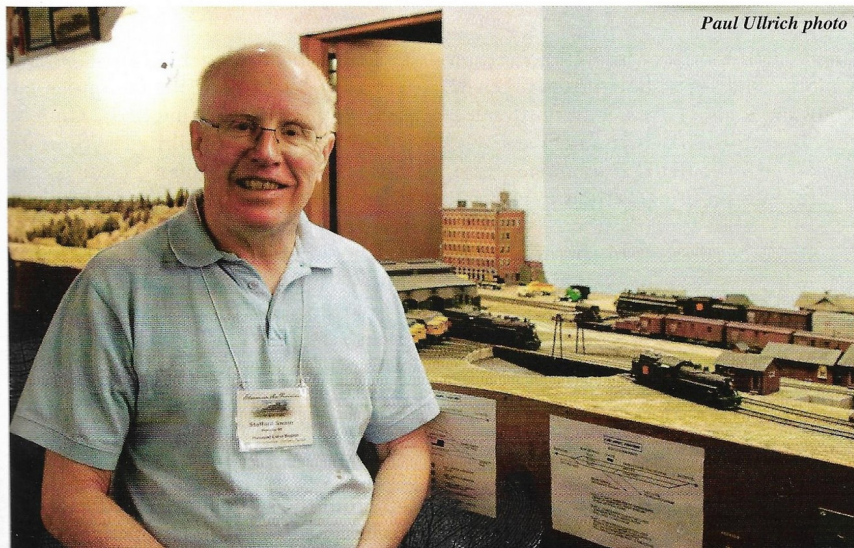
My friend, you will be greatly missed - Rest in a well-deserved peace.

*Fred Headon, MMR #328*

### **Correction**

**I**n the May 2018 magazine article, "A Port to More Fun" (an excellent article by the way), the name of Robert Pethoud is misspelled twice at Robert Penthoud. I don't know if the magazine does "Corrections" in later issues, but, if so, this misspelling should be included.

*Al Merkrebs*



*Paul Ullrich photo*



**2018 June**

**Sam Swanson earned Master Model Railroader 600.**

**Richard “Dick” Karnes earned Master Model Railroader 606.**

**2018 July**



**Cover Photo July 2018:**

**CGW Train 90 rolls over the large bridge over the Des Moines River at Fort Dodge, Iowa.**

**The CGW bridge also crosses the Illinois Central, and the Minneapolis & St. Louis Railroads. The 60-year-old bridge has been re-built twice; is 52 feet short of one-half-mile long and is 140 feet high at the river crossing.**



## Hits and Misses

**T**his, my penultimate column, gives me the opportunity to reflect on six years as your President. First, however, my congratulations to all who ran for national office and to those who won. We are so fortunate to attract such a talented group of volunteers.

Being your President has been an honor. Ironically, and with all true humility, it was an office I never sought. I was asked to run by a group of friends who felt it was important I do so, but it never occurred to me to run before that. For decades, it had been my honor to serve at the National and Regional level as a Region Trustee, Region President, and National Director. During those years, the hobby and the NMRA have undergone many changes and faced many challenges. I will review the promises made six years back and my track record on those promises in next month's column.

In this column, I'd like to concentrate on some of the things that went right and the few that went South over the past six years. Please understand that any accomplishments are ours together, which includes the initiatives over the past six years. The NMRA is not a dictatorship. A lot of talented volunteers make it work in conjunction with our very professional and hard-working office staff. To repeat a truism, success has a thousand parents, but failure is an orphan. Well, our accomplishments deserve multiple accolades because many people were responsible for them. And our few flops were pretty much the failure of one — and in most cases, that one was me!

In no particular order, here are some hits and misses. The sale of the headquarters building was in the works before I took office, and I was convinced the sale would seal my fate. I thought it would be a one-termer for sure based on the outcry when we changed our logo some years earlier. You would have thought we took up model airplanes, so vociferous was the outcry against that logo change. Well, surely (I reasoned) selling our beloved headquarters building was far "worse," and I expected to be tarred and feathered.



**NMRA President Charlie Getz**

Please understand that the sale made economic, operational, and logical sense. Our Headquarters building was lovely but frankly too big, too remote, and too expensive for our needs. Former NMRA President Mike Brestel had laid out a compelling case for the sale earlier in the then-*SCALE RAILS* magazine. But after the logo reaction, I expected an outcry second to none. Except, it never came. I think we had two or three negative responses but the combination of selling the building to the Tennessee Valley Railroad Museum, which needed it badly, as well as using the proceeds to fully fund our Life Account and establish a healthy reserve illustrated the wisdom of the sale. Plus, our rented modern office space is far better for our employees, and we save significantly on expenses. Overwhelmingly, the response was positive and encouraging — unexpectedly delightful and rewarding. Even for the few critics, I asked each of them how often they had visited the Headquarters building and never heard back from any of them.

Similarly, over ten years ago, we started the Gallery Exhibit concept with the encouragement of the California State Railroad Museum (CSRM). As I assumed office, the Exhibit was languishing in bureaucratic never-never land. CSRM still supported the plan, but we never seemed to get that all-important final approval. It was not until my second term that *finally* the papers were signed, and we were off and running as reported in last month's issue. While the Exhibit will open after President-elect

Pete Magoun takes over, it is still a major accomplishment for us all.

The rewrite of our Executive Hand Book (EHB), part of which was approved in this year's election, is well underway with the assistance of Chief Financial Officer Frank Koch and Director Mike Brestel. It will continue until completed and will result in a much more useful resource. Gone is the unwieldy EHB the size of a large dictionary, with its mish-mash of Regulations, Policies, and Procedures. Soon there will be three more usable volumes, namely the Bylaws, Corporate Procedures, and Program Procedures. Want to review the AP requirements or the Contest Rules? Go to the Program Procedures. Want to see how our corporation handles an election? Check out the Corporate Procedures. In the next column, I will review additional initiatives started over the past six years.

Terminology, of all things, has been mostly a hit! By that, I mean terms have meanings — sometimes other than what we intend. For example, most Divisions have "meets," a respected railroad term but a term anathema to many in the younger generations. I proposed we label these "events," because that is what they are. Divisions such as mine generally do not just "meet" but also hold clinics, a contest, and other activities. That, to me, is an event, not simply a meeting. So why send out an erroneous message without knowing you are doing so? I am happy to note the "event" terminology is catching on.

Similarly, "NMRANet" was the original term for new technology we helped



develop. I suggested "Layout Command Control" or LCC as much more descriptive and commercially attractive. LCC is slowly catching on, and the NMRA has played an important role. Not all terminology proposals have been successful, however. "Dead Rail," to describe battery-powered, radio-controlled motive power stubbornly persists even though I firmly believe "Power on Board" or POB is a more accurate and superior commercial term. So, please keep using that term!

My practice has been to respond as quickly and honestly as possible to every email, letter, and call received. Normally, my response included our leadership team to keep them updated on member concerns and my answers. In the overwhelming number of those communications, we have been able to reach a satisfactory outcome. Sometimes it took a long time, but we kept working at it. For example, for unknown reasons, public facilities in the Western provinces of Canada began demanding a high insurance limit for NMRA-related activities. We initially could not satisfy the demands without major cost increases for all, but with the dogged determination of Jenny Hendricks and Mike Brestel, we finally worked out an approach to address the issue. In most other cases, we resolved the problem quickly. In six years, almost every issue, question, or complaint was resolved. Sometimes it took a while, but with the help of our wonderful staff and leadership team, we got the job done.

My practice has also been one of honesty, which has not always worked out so well. Sometimes, you have to be a lot more diplomatic than brutal honesty would otherwise dictate. As my father used to advise me, "Never lie, but don't go around blabbing the truth!" Well, some had accused me of "unnecessarily blabbing the truth" when I addressed concerns about the aging of our membership and the hobby. I was accused of being "negative" and predicting the end of the hobby. I never did so, nor do I believe our end is near. To the contrary, this is the best time to enjoy model railroading in its hundred-plus year history.

However, that in and of itself does not address the aging and apparent shrinking of

our membership numbers. The elephant in the room is the aging demographics of the NMRA and the resulting apparent diminution of our numbers. This column is not the place to debate the issue, but merely raising it violated my father's sage advice. Please understand that raising a matter of concern is not the same as concluding all hope is lost. Far from it.

If any column generated a reaction, it had to be one I wrote years ago, confessing that I was not personally interested in operations. Remember the sale of Headquarters? Well, the response I expected for that announcement came instead to my column on operations! Mind you, I did not cast aspersions on ops or my many friends who not only operate but are rabid about it. Well, it made no difference, for I had inadvertently touched the third-rail of model railroading, discovering there are indeed two camps: operators and those who secretly have no interest in operations! And the two camps seem surprisingly equal in numbers. The difference is the operator faction is far more vocal than the non-operator faction, who freely admit they feel like second-class citizens based on their preferences. It was a very humbling and fascinating exercise but one not to be repeated any time soon. And for the record, I understand, respect and admire operations. I may even try it again now that I will have time.

A final hit has been the five National Conventions I attended and the numerous Regional Conventions from Ames, Iowa, to Darby, England, on behalf of the NMRA. We have fabulous Regions, and it has been a joy attending as many Regionals as I could. I look forward to Kansas City and seeing many of you, so please make plans to participate in this year's National Convention in Kansas City if you have not already.

So, there you have it. Some random Hits and Misses. No complaints. One close friend said I became President because I love politics and enjoy the adoration. That is pretty funny! I can assure you that due to the efforts of many recent Presidents and Boards, "politics" in the NMRA have almost disappeared. Adoration? Hardly!



**M**y name is Sally Bando, and I am from the NMRA Southeastern Region's Piedmont Division.

I'm a model railroader because it's a great way to be creative and to share my hobby with others. There is so much to learn; electricity, mechanics, design, construction, and implementation. I have an Fn3 (G scale) railroad, so it's a little out of the norm for most model railroaders, although my husband James and I are welcomed just the same. Putting together scenes and building structures is a lot of fun. This hobby gives my husband and me something in common to work on together. What better way to have date night than to eat out and then go to a Division meeting to see all our friends and talk trains!

I joined the NMRA in 2008. I took on the task of helping with the 2013 NMRA National Convention in Atlanta, Georgia; served as Region Treasurer (2014–2019); and currently serve as Division Director of Operations and Marketing Chair.

Trains have become a way of life for us. Joining a club is an excellent way for women to get involved with the hobby. I'm personally involved in several where my input is listened to and appreciated. Women do look at things differently than men, so perspective from both sides is beneficial to everyone.

Since 2009, our home has been open for the annual Piedmont Pilgrimage layout tour. On average, we receive 80 visitors at our open house every year. Some are first-time visitors; others are annual followers who come to see what's new.

James joined the NMRA in 1973. His major role in clubs is taking photos wherever we go and then sharing them for publication in newsletters, articles, or for documentation and marketing of related events. Taking pictures keeps him really busy. When I married James in 1977, I knew there would be trains in my future. He had many more boxes of trains than personal items when we moved into our home! It's no surprise that I eventually got hooked on trains too.

What really got me into the hobby was a local train show in 2008 where one of



(Left to right): Walt Liles - Superintendent of the Piedmont Division; the author receiving the Conductor Award; Royal Bruce - Director of Operations of the Piedmont Division. — James Bando photo

the vendors was running Fn3 live steam. James pulled me away from my booth to watch the steam puffing from the smoke-stack. That's all it took! Now I have three live steamers and six steam engines running off the Revolution system. We enjoy modeling the turn of the century where we have Native Americans, the Pony Express, old western towns, and even gunfights. You get the point. Anything goes in the Old West! What fun it really is always creating something new for our visitors to see and enjoy at our next open house.

In our model railroading community, I don't feel as though I am a token lady. I'm just "one of the guys." Often, emails I receive say "Lady and Gentlemen," which cracks me up every time! In my spare time, I also embroider train logos on club shirts for the members. I often have a vendor booth at the local shows and sell all train-related items like bibs that say, "Grandpa keeps me on Track," embellished with a train. I also sell towels, Polos, and t-shirts —all with a train motif. The machine embroidery was a hobby at the beginning, and now it has grown into a real job!

I have around 70 train engines on file that I can embroider. Both steam and diesel engines are custom made for the clubs. It is really nice to see the happy train customers proudly wearing their club shirts.

The very first meeting that James and I went to was quite scary for me. I knew that I was entering a male-dominated hobby.

Howard Goodwin was the Superintendent at the time. Howard called for visitors to stand up. I didn't want to stand up; I was very nervous at the thought of 100-plus men knowing that I had invaded their space. I wasn't sure what the reaction was going to be. I was so wrong about everything. After the meeting, Howard thanked me for coming and asked me to come back. Other members came up to welcome me too! I even learned what a "duck under" was at that first meeting. James didn't have to drag me to the next meeting; I went happily. What was I going to learn next time at the meeting?

The Piedmont Division has several women who attend meetings regularly. The Director of Finance and Director of Operations are both women. Other women work on layouts at their homes. It's quite interesting that women often do all the dioramas and scenery — and they're really good at it! Women are pros at working with color and textures in everyday life, so why not apply these skills to modeling? I always joke that there are a lot of "closet modelers" out there, women included!

Just because modeling trains is a male-dominated hobby doesn't mean that women aren't welcome. Women do bring new and inspiring ideas into modeling. Women do have a lot to offer. Men have discovered the hobby can be shared with women and that model railroading, after all, is a rewarding hobby for everyone. 🚂



**2018 August**

**James Little earned Master Model Railroader 611.**

**Jack D. Monette earned Master Model Railroader 613.**

**2018 September**

**VICTORIA LOHMAN**

## Women in Model Railroading

by Victoria Lohman

### Model Railroading - A Family Hobby

I first became interested in model trains when my toddler son started watching “Thomas the Tank Engine” and wanted to go get the corresponding toys. My interest in fulfilling that request inspired my husband to tell me that he had always wanted to build a model train layout. That moment started us on our model railroad journey. We did not have space for a layout at the time, so we started collecting rolling stock models, which my husband built and stored away. A couple of years later, we moved to the small town of Lompoc, California.

During a visit to the local hardware store, we found an arts and crafts section that included scale models such as rolling stock and other model railroading supplies. The scenery section caught my eye, and I saw something I had never seen before: Hot Wire Foam Factory tools. The tools’ packaging inspired me to start thinking of ways to incorporate foam into our planned layout scenery, but since we had just moved, our layout was on hold for now.

A few years passed. I searched for a part-time job since all my kids were in school. I came across an ad with a name I recognized: Hot Wire Foam Factory! I applied for the job, all the while thinking about the new things I could do with our model railroad scenery if I could learn more about these tools.

I landed the job, and a brief time later, my boss gave me the opportunity to attend model railroading shows on behalf of the company. I love art, so I practiced making foam scenery and incorporated artistic techniques so that I could help other people make scenery with the tools, too. Over the years, I’ve had the pleasure of helping create new products and accessories at Hot Wire Foam Factory, specifically with model railroading in mind.

After attending numerous train shows and seeing hundreds of different layouts with various time periods, scales, and locales, I started getting more involved in choosing the style of buildings and rolling stock models for my family’s collection. We were drawn to the 1860s–1940s time period, but raising three young children meant we had a tight budget to spend on our hobby. I tried to see how many things I could make myself, which inspired me to get creative and try new techniques for building stuff from scratch. Scratchbuilding meant that I did not have to settle for only what was available in a catalog; shape, size, color, and time period were all up to us.

Our model railroading journey started nearly 18 years ago, and I am 13 years into my Hot Wire Foam Factory adventure. My three children have become adults, and two of them now have children of their own. I

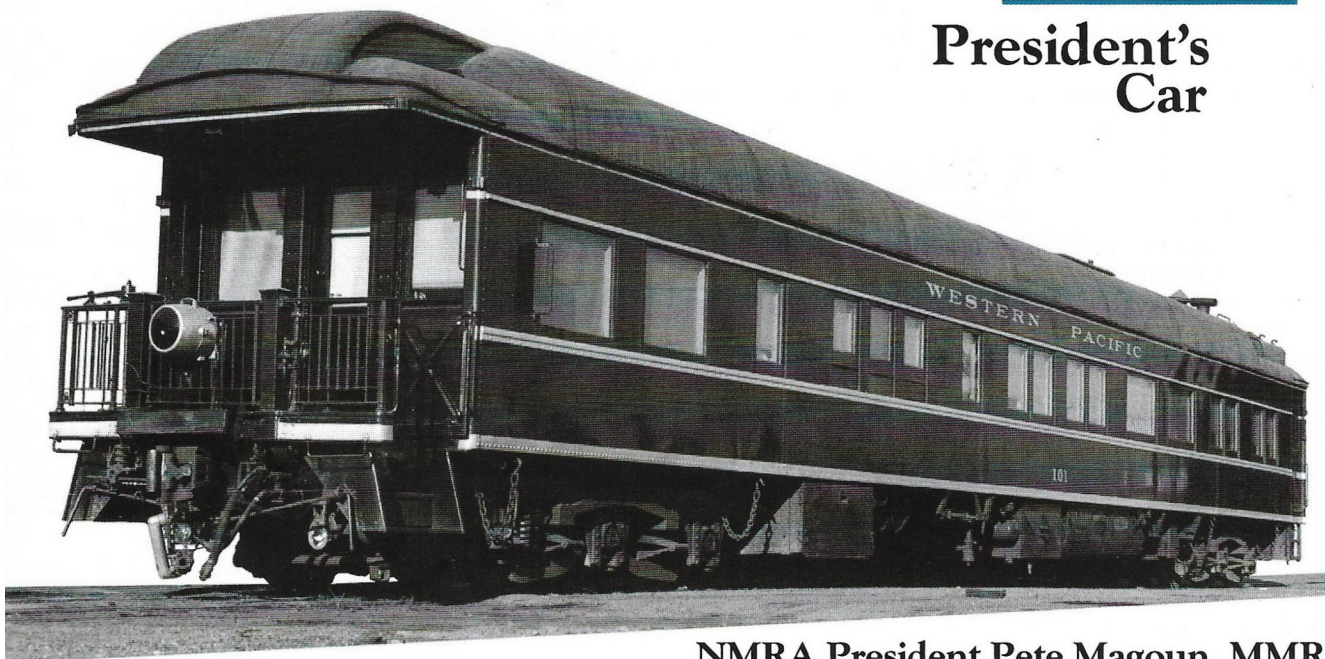


am still learning new modeling tricks and techniques, as well as getting a new generation into the hobby.

Model railroading has been such a creative outlet for me over the years. I have also enjoyed the community aspect of this hobby. Through train shows, social media, and my work at Hot Wire Foam Factory, I have connected with other individuals, couples, and families around the world who share my family’s interest in model railroading. 📷



## President's Car



**NMRA President Pete Magoun, MMR**

### Kansas City!

**O**n to the Kansas City convention, and a good convention it was! I'm in Kansas City as I write this editorial, and will probably fill it out when I've been home long enough to get some sleep! These conventions are exhausting and exhilarating! Kansas City, by the way, is a great train-watching town, what with Amtrak several times a day and a plethora of BNSF and Union Pacific freights of various types rolling through all day and into the night. The hotel is across the street from Union Station, which is brightly lit in blue at night, so any "necessary railfanning" can be done simply by crossing the intersection and walking up to the bridge across the tracks. If you don't see any trains, wait about ten or fifteen minutes.

A major "Thank You" to convention chair Stephen Priest, his family, and the entire KC2018 convention committee for the job they all did showcasing Kansas City and its rail environs in scales from 1:1 to Z! Including a healthy dose of Barbecue was another good call... the food is spectacular!

The Annual Board of Directors Meeting produced a number of good reports. We have a clean audit from the independent auditors, who are now using the NMRA as an example of sound fiscal management. Our partnership programs are adding partners (think discounts for purchases), we're not competing with hobby shops, and the Model Railroad Exhibit at the California State Railroad Museum is slated to open in 2019. The CSRSM, by the way, is now part of the Smithsonian Institution's museum system, so we have been invited into a world-class museum. The Annual General Meeting on Thursday evening saw the "regime change," as former NMRA President Charlie Getz handed the virtual gavel to me. I look forward to the next three years as your President — I have an excellent Board to work with, and that means a lot.

The variety of clinics available was excellent, and I heard a lot of positive commentary on them. One "first-timer" approached me at the National Train Show and noted that he had attended 38 clinics over the week (whew!), was absolutely delighted, and thought that each of the clinics was a "college-level class"

(his term) in model railroading. He'll be back for more!

That member's comment is right on the money — the local committees work hard on getting the best clinicians to offer their experiences. One "social comment" here from me on this process — if you're attending a clinic by a "big name" person in the hobby, and you have questions, be sure to ask them, either during the clinic or afterward. These folks are real people who are delighted to share their knowledge on their subject with you. In addition, they are really just friends to whom you have not yet been introduced. Go for it!

I was privileged to help Charlie present a President's Award for service to the NMRA and to the hobby to the Operations Road Show, which after a 20-year-plus run, is retiring the railroad from public exhibitions as the crew deals with aging and other time-related issues. It's been a great teaching aid. I've been privileged to operate and learn on it several times, and we are going to miss their patient tutelage.

Charlie and I were fortunate to be able to present a number of awards at Saturday evening's banquet. Phil Walthers, who is retiring from the day-to-day operations of



## 2018 October **Stephen Priest Convention Chair Kansas City Cont.**

William K. Walthers, Inc. — a staunch supporter of the NMRA for decades — earned and received a Distinguished Service Award for service to the NMRA and the hobby over the course of several decades. Phil will continue as Chairman of the Board, but the day-to-day operations will be vested in Stacey Walthers Naffah, who has been with the company for several years. I had a brief chance to chat with Stacey and Phil; she will do well.

Charlie and I also presented a number of President's awards, a Meritorious Service Award, and a batch of President's Awards for Service to the Division; these will be listed separately on the website. It is, indeed, a pleasure to acknowledge the help of myriad volunteers from the Division on up who make this Association function as well as it does all over the world!

We were fortunate to have Tony Koester as our banquet speaker; as is his custom, he brought down the house with his commentary on various aspects of the hobby. To quote a favorite phrase, "Model Railroading is Fun!"

The National Train Show featured a lot of model railroads from briefcase-size to enormous modular exhibitions, done in multiple scales, including several LEGO railroads. Suppliers large and small offered both old and new, and those with whom I spoke were very positive about the Show. The NMRA is working to reduce exhibitor and supplier costs for their efforts on our behalf, and they seem to be productive efforts. Stay tuned.

One of the best things about this convention was the noticeable presence of younger, and for that matter, young people at both the convention and the Train Show. Watching teens run freights on modular railroads using their phones as cabs was a treat! The hobby is thriving!

As you undoubtedly have heard by now, a factory in China closed its doors rather abruptly awhile back, leav-

ing several well-known manufacturers in the lurch. Please be assured that none of these firms are on the "way out." I spoke with several of the firms directly affected by the closing and received the same answers from all of them: "We're down right now, but not out." The process of finding new sources of supply, gathering existing tooling, moving it, setting it up, getting it running, training employees, checking Quality Assurance processes, changing the supply chain (as the logistics of ordering and receiving raw materials, component parts and so on is now known), working out shipping contracts, production runs, and so on is complicated. It has to be done right to provide the quality merchandise we've come to expect from these companies.

Decades ago, I went through similar processes as a Major Subcontracts Administrator in an aerospace corporation; the process was equally complicated, not fun, full of stress on all sides, and unable to turn on the proverbial dime. So be patient, let the suppliers do what they do best, and we'll have "goodies" from them just as soon as they can get them to market. They've been down this road before and know how to navigate the uncertainties, but they're going to need some time to do so.

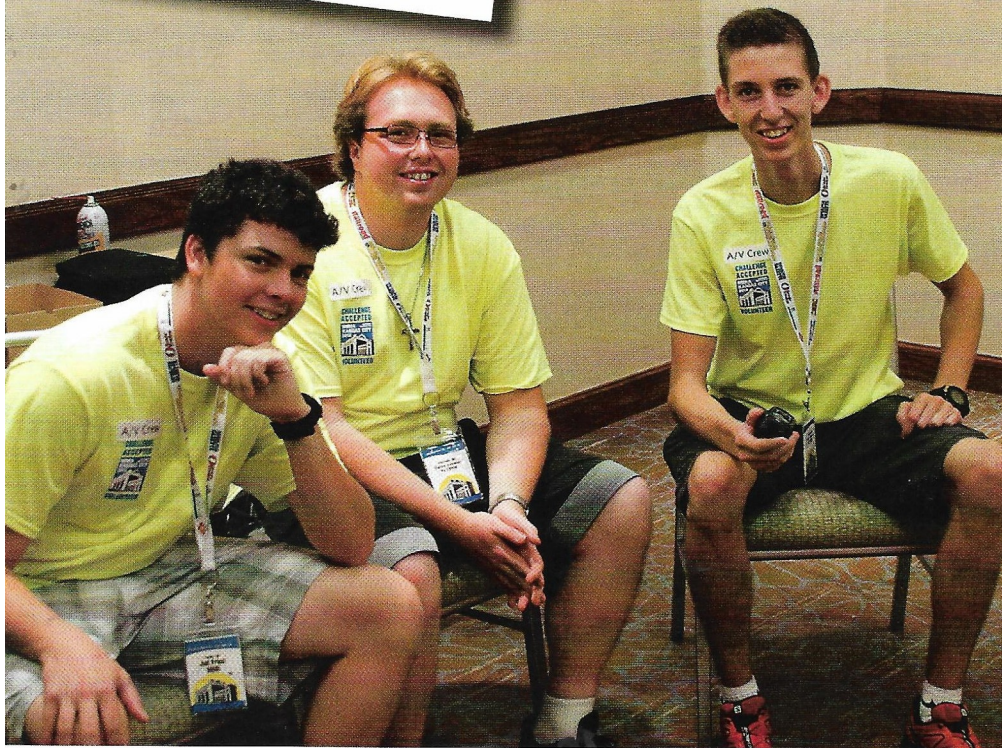
So again, a big "Thanks!" to those who volunteer their hobby time to help make the NMRA work well. This is our Association, and we all need to work together to make things work. Let's Do It!

High Green!

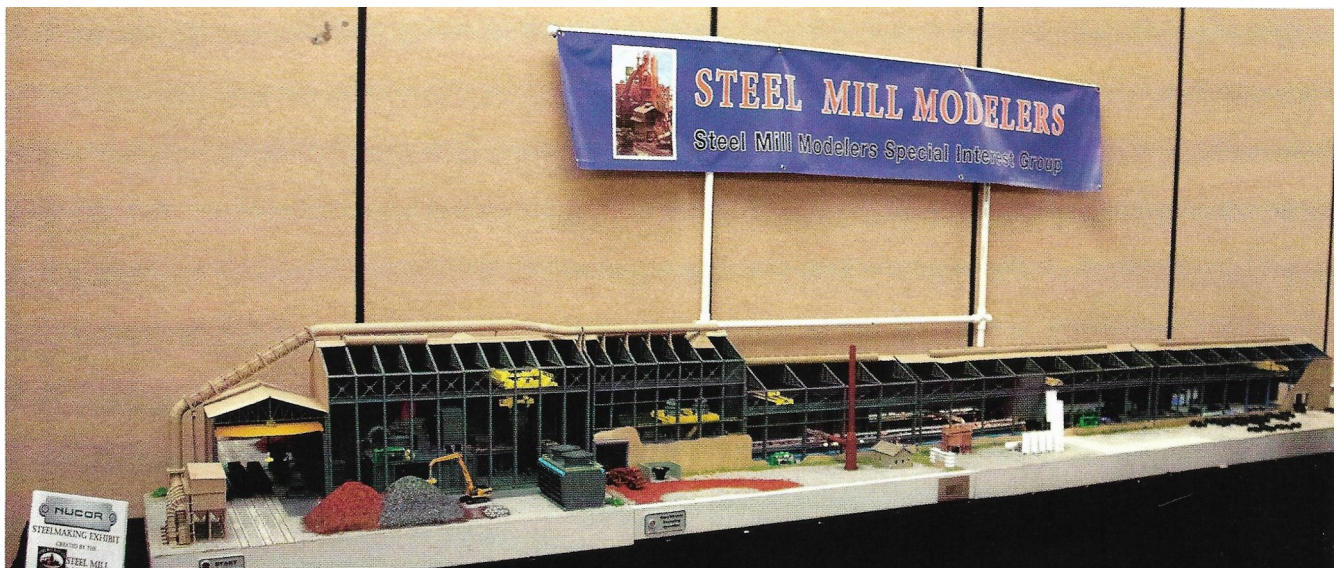
A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Pete". The signature is stylized with a large, looping 'P' and a cursive 'ete'.



**2018 October The Priest Family, Stephen, Cinthia and Joel were major Volunteers at Kansas City Convention.**



**Joel Priest, MMR, Danny Johnson and Cody Cameron...These young men were responsible for ensuring the computers and projection equipment worked throughout 120 clinics.**



**Central Indiana Division Member Phillip Burnside played a huge role in the development and construction of this model.**





**Phil Walthers (right) presented a Distinguished Service Award by NMRA President Pete Magoun.**

## Women in Model Railroading

“Girls Don’t Play with Trains!”

by Susan Werner

When I asked my father for a train set at age 12, he said “no” in a very stern voice “Girls don’t play with trains!” I knew that answer was final. That response put my interest in model railroading on the back burner until my early 20s. I was building models of many kinds since my early teens, learning construction techniques, the concept of scale, and attention to details.

By my early 20s, I was an Army 1st Lieutenant with my own income and living quarters. A trip down the “wrong” aisle at the local hobby shop rekindled my interest (now addiction) in model railroading. I was there looking for another ship model kit when I spotted a selection of brass locomotives. One look at those golden beauties with their extraordinary detail, smooth running, and the near-prototype look inspired that still smoldering ember in my heart to leap into flame. My interest in model trains was re-ignited. I was drawn to craftsman kits with so many pieces of wood and details that I could advance my skills as I spent more time with them.

I joined the NMRA with my first husband in the 1970s and then again in the early 1980s with my current husband. My passion for this hobby is not shared so much by my husband, Hans, but to his credit, he

tolerates and supports my efforts in the hobby. He also likes to see the trains run around the track and enjoys seeing the latest fruits of my labors.

Raising a family took precedence, and building a layout was put on a back burner. Once we were empty nesters, my husband and I added on to the house and made room for a layout. I am currently building a model railroad set in Down East Maine around 1918. I really like the diminutive size of the locomotives and rolling stock, to say nothing of the look of truss rods on the cars. It also allows me to establish a logging line and run my favorite geared locomotives. The layout is a 21x14-foot island on the third floor of my home. I enjoy the challenge of building craftsman kits, and I am starting to learn the art of scratchbuilding.

I have been an active member of the Mid-Central Region’s Keystone Division since the late 1980s. I have served in many capacities, including Division Superintendent, Bring-N-Brag chair, and Regional Convention Chair in 2012. I am also an Achievement Program Judge and have worked in contests at Division, Region, and National levels. Because of this, my modeling skills have significantly increased. I have made many friends along the way, both locally and nationally, and chal-



lenged my modeling skills with every great model I see. I am also one of the founding members of the Mid-Mon Valley Model Railroad Club currently located in New Eagle, Pennsylvania, where I have served as President and am now the Secretary and Treasurer.

I am actively working in the Achievement Program and currently hold three Certificates. Three more Certificates are nearly complete as my efforts continue. I look forward to the day when I complete my seventh Certificate and my MMR. My membership in the NMRA has been invaluable to me and has aided immeasurably in my advancement in this hobby.

I hope that this story serves to demonstrate that one does not have to start in the hobby as a small child to find the passion to be an avid model railroader! 🚂



2018 November

## Women in Model Railroading

by Jenny Maaske

**M**y name is Jenny Maaske, and I am an assistant editor at *Model Railroader Video Plus*. I also work part-time for *Model Railroader* magazine.

I will admit that I didn't know *Model Railroader* magazine existed until I graduated college and applied for a job at Kalmbach Publishing Co. I was hired as an editorial assistant for *Model Retailer* magazine (the former hobby trade magazine) and *Scale Auto*, a magazine that serves the model-automotive building community.

My introduction to model railroading began a few years later when *MRVP* Producer David Popp was building the *Model Railroader Video Plus* staff and recruited me because of the video work I had been doing for *Scale Auto*. I didn't know much about model railroading, except that it seemed like a fun and creative hobby! I was excited for the opportunity to learn and the chance to lend a hand with project railroads.

Since some of my hobbies include interior decorating, crafting, and DIY projects, it makes sense that I am more interested in the artistic aspect of model railroading as opposed to operational. I think it may be safe to assume that is the case for many of the women involved in the hobby. I may never understand DCC, wiring, or electrical work, and that's okay with me!

My first hands-on experience with model railroading was the T-Trak Group Project, where *MRVP* and *MR* staff members each built a T-Trak module. I grew up near the Wisconsin & Southern, so I decided to model a portion of my parents' yard with a view

of the tracks. While building my module, I learned many basic scenery skills, including ballasting track and laying ground foam. The best part was re-creating special details such as our vegetable garden, the giant rock I used to climb on, and our lilac bush. I was ecstatic when I found scale tomato plants and deer!

I enjoy doing scenery work for *MRVP*'s project railroads. I've made hundreds of trees for the N-scale Canadian Canyons layout, laid ground covering and placed trees on the On30 Olympia and Olympia 2 layouts, and helped add figures and details to *Classic Toy Trains*' O-scale City Terminal and Transfer layout.

Everyone in the model railroading community has been supportive and welcoming. The experiences I've had at shows like Trainfest have been outstanding. It is always a great pleasure to meet our readers and viewers and put faces to names. A common question I get at shows is do I have my own layout and what do I model. The answer is I don't have one, but I have put some thought into it. It would be a fictional layout. I would model the steam engine era with cute little towns and neighborhoods, and lots of fun scenery. Yes, I said cute.

Truth be told, if it weren't for my job, I would not have gotten into the hobby; however, I've enjoyed working on the various layouts at Kalmbach very much.

My advice for any women interested in model railroading but don't know where to start, is to start with something small, such as a T-Trak module or shelf layout. Just have fun with it — for you never know where it will lead you to next!



2018 December

**Rob McLear earned Master Model Railroader 616.**

**Jeff Palmer earned Master Model Railroader 620.**



# Women in Model Railroading

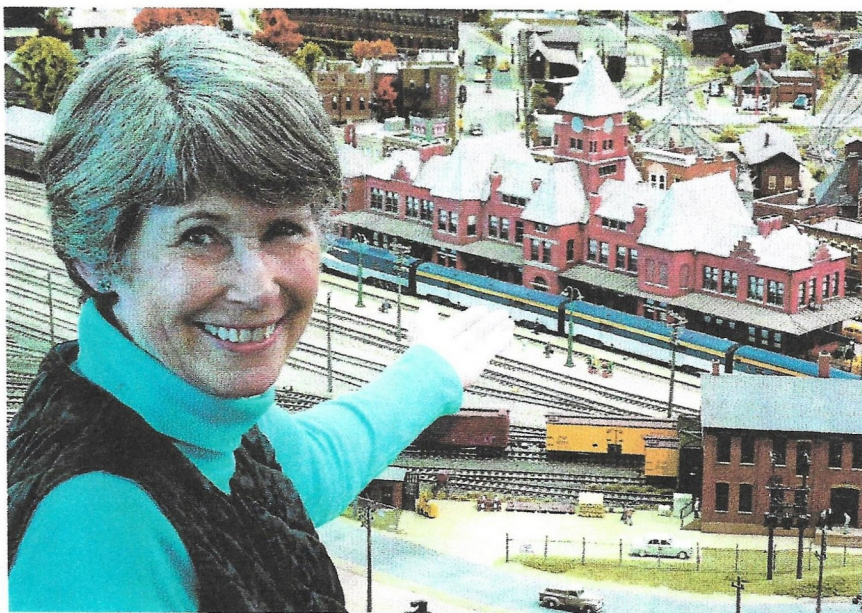
by Brook Qualman

**W**here to begin? I know this wasn't how I envisioned spending my retirement. However, despite the pressure to finish our 3,000-square-foot model railroad in our lifetimes, I find it strangely addictive and satisfying.

## How I Became a Model Railroader

My background includes building a 1:12 scale landscaped dollhouse (9x3-feet) and a love of making things — anything. I also like miniatures. These interests dovetailed with my husband's plans following his retirement from the auto industry. Typically, retirees such as Jay select a collector hobby like vintage cars and become marginal golfers. But, no, he decided to take on a greater challenge: building a museum-quality model railroad. I had no idea how extensive it was going to be until we purchased property overlooking CSX's north-south main line in Milford, Michigan, and designed our retirement home to serve as a lid for our trains.

Modeling iconic railroad locations was the original plan, but Jay changed our focus to what we knew best: areas where we've lived or that have a family connection. He suggested I might enjoy building some of these family homes and businesses. That's what got me started. However, rather than begin with something such as a small bungalow, he asked me to construct Pere Marquette's expansive Potter Street Station in Saginaw, shown in the photo. I was too naive to comprehend what I was getting into. I heavily kitbashed the Milwaukee Station by Walther's. Not a single piece was used as it came out of the



box. It took me six months, but the result was very gratifying.

Although our prototype-based Michigan Lines layout depicts the major rail lines radiating from the Detroit Riverfront in the early 1950s, I grew up in Pennsylvania and New Jersey. Because the track configurations in my hometowns also worked for our Michigan locales, we have a section that includes the homes, businesses, stores, and churches I remember.

Jay is a member of Division 6 in the North Central Region and the Midnight Pocatello Yardmasters operating group. When the men came to our home to oper-

ate, I joined them. Even though I've been an NMRA member since 2010. Given the hobby's male orientation, I chose to do switching in a yard away from the group so as not to intrude. The group, however, has supported my involvement and invited me to become a member. They also encouraged me to attend Division 6 meetings and work toward becoming an NMRA Master Model Railroader.

We have held several open houses where my work has been on display. As a result, I was asked to present a clinic on scratchbuilding structures at a Division 6 meeting. It was pretty intimidating being the only woman in a room of 60 men. I have since been asked to present at several Regional conventions.

Eleven years have passed since we began our railroad. I have created more than 200 mostly scratchbuilt structures and gained countless new friends. I've earned my NMRA Golden Spike Award and Structures Achievement Certificate, and I am currently working on my Scenery Certificate. I've given clinics about modeling towns and scratchbuilding structures at NMRA conventions and Division meetings. My modeling is a full-time job: 8 AM to 6:30 PM four to seven days a week. But, the commute is short...just down to the lower level. 🚂



# Women in Model Railroading

by Linda Kacprzak



I have always liked trains. In my youth, I enjoyed playing with model trains and spent a lot of time watching the prototype action from a bridge overlooking a large railroad yard near my home in Maple Heights, Ohio. After we were married, my husband Rich and I developed a common interest in riding and chasing trains while on numerous camping trips and vacations over many decades. We found a train to ride almost everywhere while visiting 48 states on road trips, cruises, and Amtrak, including one memorable ride on the *Empire Builder* to a national NMRA convention on the West Coast. In fact, we celebrated our 50th wedding anniversary at a West Virginia State Park Resort with our children, son-in-law, and grandchildren and made sure we included a train ride.

My introduction to the hobby of model railroading many years ago was a box of unpainted figures Rich brought home from a train show. I started painting figures and building dioramas after attending some how-to clinics at Regional and National NMRA conventions. I've come a long way in my modeling skills since then. I was introduced to narrow gauge by a friend of my husband, and my more ambitious finished projects now include two HO<sub>n</sub>30 micro-

layouts—the newest an 18x30-inch layout of Coal Creek with a tourist train and a coke oven historic park. Recently, I made a small farm diorama for Bring & Brag at a monthly meeting and will work on a new display at the Mid-Central Region Division 5's "How to Build a Railroad" day in November 2018, where I demonstrate scenery tips and techniques every year.

My other hobby is genealogy, which led to surprises on both sides of my family. First, I found out that my paternal grandfather's cousin was a machinist for the Pere Marquette Railroad. Then, I always knew that my maternal grandfather worked on railroad cars at Jones & Laughlin Steel in Cleveland, Ohio, but I learned six years ago that early in his career he worked as a car repairman for the Newburgh & South Shore Railroad. Naturally, I volunteered to work at the 2014 NMRA National Convention in Cleveland and built the NSS convention car (complete with grandpa).

My modeling interest is in scenic details, using common, relatively low-cost materials. At train shows, you will see me searching for bargains in tubs of odds and ends. I enjoy building old plastic kits, cardstock buildings, and scratchbuilt structures,

then placing them in super-detailed scenes. I have written articles on various topics and submitted many photos that were published in the *Trainwire*, Division 5's newsletter, and the *Mini-Bunch Newsletter*, a narrow-gauge publication. I especially like researching the history of old structures and historic areas. I volunteered at two MCR Regional conventions sponsored by Division 5, one of which included leading a tour of President James A. Garfield's home. I also helped at the Painesville Railroad Museum for the Lincoln Train exhibition. At Railfest, the Division's annual two-day train show, you'll find me at the NMRA membership table with one of my projects, just to entice people to stop and ask questions about the hobby and the NMRA. I will never tire of attending conventions (where I have actually participated in operating sessions such as on Bruce Chubb's spectacular layout), train shows, and meetings because I always learn something new.

More women should get involved in model railroading. We like miniatures and are interested in scenery on layout tours and train show modules with our husbands and significant others. Why not join in the fun and sense of accomplishment? 🚂



**2019 January**

**Kurt Thompson eraned Master Model Railroader 619.**

**2019 February**

**Mark Norman eraned Master Model Railroader 617.**

**Andy Doll eraned Master Model Railroader 621.**

**2019 March**

**Robert Barnett eraned Master Model Railroader 605.**

**2019 April**

**Jerry Lauchle eraned Master Model Railroader 618.**





# Women in Model Railroading

by Beverly Farnham

**W**hile my children were growing up, I had a train around the Christmas tree every year. When I lived in Germany from 1965 to 1968, I purchased a number of kits for houses and buildings. I built the kits and then put them around the Christmas tree with the train. When I went back to Germany in 2000, I purchased another dozen or so houses and building kits that I assembled when I returned home. I built a small HO German layout four years ago. I put scenery on the layout and weathered the buildings and the German trains, included people milling around, and I set up four electric lampposts at the passenger station.

I joined the NMRA on August 1, 2015, and I earned the Golden Spike Award on May 5, 2016, and I just earned the Chief Dispatcher Certificate on September 1, 2017. I am working on two to three other Certificates at this time. What a way to learn about model railroading!

My mother, Betty Buck, got me started in model railroading when she was building her N-scale layout of downtown Key West (Florida). She was a member of the Engineers of Southern Florida Club in Miami. When she moved to Wauchula, Florida, she joined the Ridge Model Railroad Club. The Engineers of Southern Florida Club

was commissioned to build a model railroad layout in 1978 by the *National Enquirer*, and she helped construct it from its conception. In 1983, Cypress Gardens Railroad Society purchased the layout from the *National Enquirer*. She was the only female member.

I met my husband online, and we found out that we had a lot of things in common, including trains. When we got married eight years ago, I became more involved in modeling with my husband. We host Ops sessions once a month and have a great group of friends from whom I've learned a lot of additional information.

I dispatch using a CTC panel and timetables for the movement of trains across the railroad. As dispatcher, as many as seven trains are moving at any given time with up to 22 trains dispatched during one Ops session. I last dispatched for an operating



session for the 2017 National Convention OPSIG program. I have been a train engineer, moving trains between locations, switching cars according to the jobs on the switch lists, and following train orders and timetables. I have worked the Trim/Hogger position, assembling train consists per blocking orders, and I have worked the Power Desk as the Hostler, removing, turning, and assembling engine consists for trains, then moving them to the departure tracks.

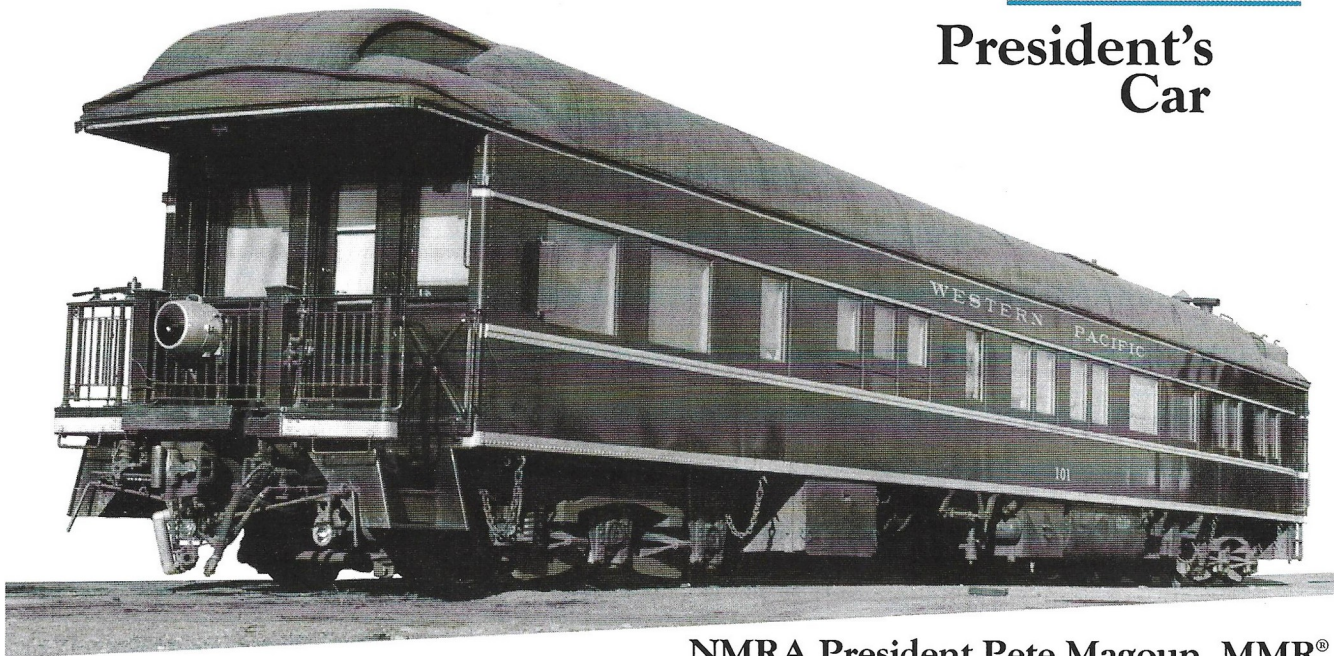
During our last Ops session, we had four women running trains. *Hooray!* I keep encouraging the wives to join us in the hobby, to experience it with their husbands. One lady, who came recently for the first time, said she never watched her husband run trains on his layout, but when we got her involved, her parting remark was, "I'll be back." How encouraging!

I was just voted in as the Secretary/Treasurer for the Sunshine Region, Eastern Division. Plus, at our last board meeting, the board voted me to hold the position of the Women's Program. Needless to say, I am very interested in the experiences of all the women in the articles that are being published in the *NMRA MAGAZINE*. 📺



2019 April

## President's Car



**NMRA President Pete Magoun, MMR®**

### Winter Board Meeting 2019

**Y**our Officers, Board of Directors, and Department Heads gathered in Atlanta, Georgia, on February 16, 2019, for what has now been renamed the Winter Board Meeting (previously known as the Midyear meeting). Board Meetings can tend toward very dry, and this one was no exception, but we covered a lot of necessary business. Secretary Rick Coble will have detailed minutes of the meeting available later, but I'd like to cover some of the highlights here.

Each Board Member and Department Head had submitted a report on activities within their particular realms; these were covered quickly and were accepted.

The Board has developed an "Action List" of projects in process with an overseeing Director assigned to each one to ensure that objectives don't stagnate. The Board discussed these items at length during the Director Caucus on Friday evening; the list was amended as necessary at the Saturday meeting. I am pleased to note that while several items were added on Saturday, the number of "completed items" was greater than the number of items added.

We have received requests for creation of a "remote" Modeling With the Masters® program, which would include special-fare web conferencing (for want of a better term) in which MWTM staff would conduct a MWTM clinic for an interactive video audience. This concept has a good deal of merit for enhancing the NMRA experience for those whose geographic or other limitations preclude attendance at a convention where MWTM clinics are offered. Eastern District Director Jim Gore, MMR®, is working on this process; we should have more information in Salt Lake City, Utah, this summer.

We discussed promotional videos, wherein NMRA members have access to professional videos as a member benefit. The process has merit, but the participation level is still low, and that led to a discussion of member benefits in general. The NMRA website has a PowerPoint informational presentation on member benefits; this presentation will be featured in a more prominent location on the site.

The website itself, although vastly improved over the last few years, still has "issues" with members who are finding it difficult to garner information and navigate through the site. The NMRA Information Technologies team is working with VP Special Projects Gerry Leone, MMR®, to hire an outside company to evaluate and change the site where necessary. This may include hiring a "Content Manager" to update the site on a regular basis. The discussion of what the NMRA needs was moved to the Committee, with an expectation of a report in Salt Lake City.

As you know, we have had a Gallery Exhibit project proposed for the California State Railroad Museum for several years. Last fall, the State of California resolved its internal issues and we reviewed the planned exhibit with the contractor. Several factors, most related to cost increases, caused us to terminate the relationship with that contractor and sign a contract with Gizmo Art Productions, a San Francisco-based exhibit production company. The project



is now underway and on schedule for a targeted opening in the fall.

The Board reviewed and approved several proposed changes to the Achievement Program's Association Official and Association Volunteer certificates to expand the ability of members in certain positions at Division, Region, and National levels to earn these certificates and to recognize their contributions to the success of the organization. These changes also acknowledge the contributions and changes to data collection and dissemination necessitated by social and digital media.

For decades, the NMRA has been operating with meeting names that were appropriate to a fiscal year ending that differed with the calendar year, despite the change in our fiscal year to move it to a calendar year basis several years ago. We updated things this time, so the majority of the organization, which is in the northern hemisphere, will now recognize the "Winter Meeting" as being in the middle of the northern hemisphere's winter, and the "Summer Meeting" as being held at the National Convention in the summer. We also clarified the ends of terms for various positions on the National Board.

There was an instance this year where a candidate statement for the current election was edited [prior to submission to the *NMRA MAGAZINE*; no changes were made by *NMRA MAGAZINE* staff] without the candidate's knowledge or consent. We discussed this event and agreed that candidate statements for any NMRA election were not to be edited in any way in the future.

This gathering was the last scheduled meeting that At-Large Worldwide Director Mike Brestel will attend as At-Large Worldwide Director; he is term-limited out this year and will leave the Board at the beginning of the summer meeting in Salt Lake City, Utah. I was honored to present Mike with a President's Award for his service to the NMRA as ALWWD. The Board and I will miss his "corporate memory" and sincerely appreciate his decades of service to the NMRA.

Look for more complete coverage when the minutes are released.

High Green!

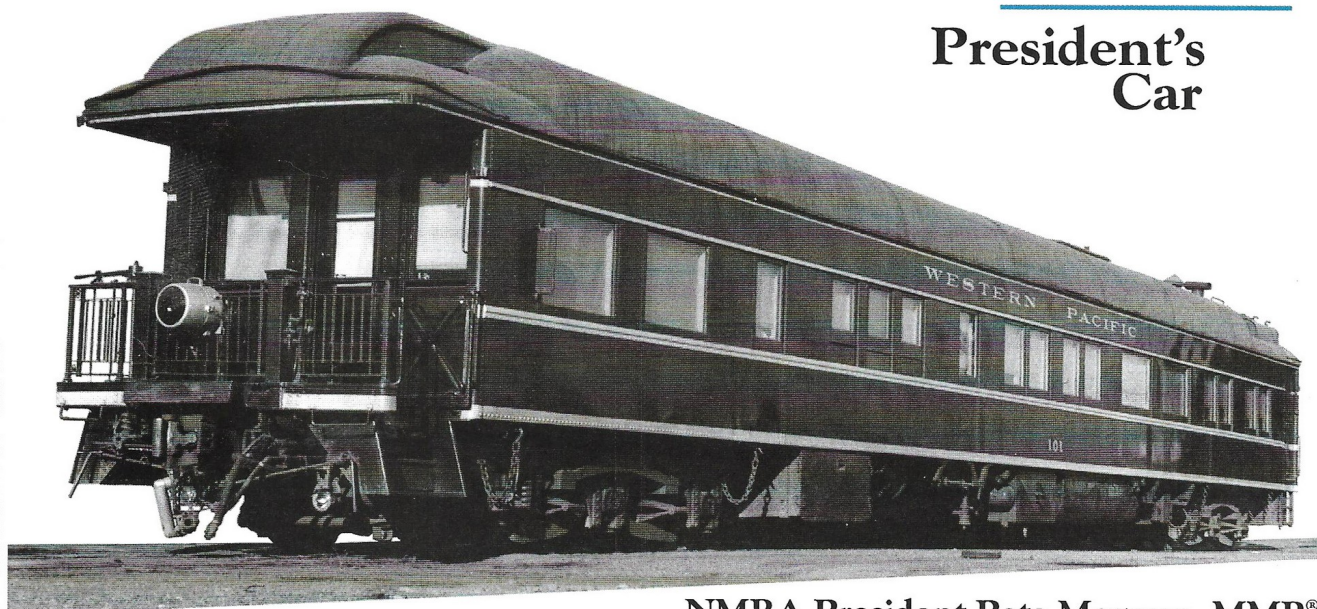




2019 May

**nmra**  
magazine

The NMRA advances the worldwide scale model railroading community through education and standards as well as advocacy and fellowship.



## President's Car

**NMRA President Pete Magoun, MMR®**

### Impolitic Politics

**T**he NMRA is a dynamic organization and, in many ways, is in a constant state of flux. As I wrote this editorial, we were about to finish up a National/Global election process, and candidate statements are due very soon for the next one (see who won the election as well as the call for candidates on pages 9 and 11, respectively). The election process will continue to one extent or another for the foreseeable future, and it's natural that all of us have preferences for candidates and want "our candidate" to win, which is all well and good. What's the best way to accomplish that? Vote. It's very simple. Vote. That's all there is to it.

However, there is more to the election process than just voting. We publish candidate statements in various media and call attention to those statements in those media as well. So far, so good. However, it is here where things begin to derail. Candidate A's friends and supporters start to inundate NMRA media with statements of support for their candidate. Candidate B's supporters do the same. And that is, frankly, unacceptable. The NMRA must remain impartial.

We've made the process and the rules as clear as we can, but the Marketing industry tells us that you have to send a message something like seven times before it gets seen or heard. The message here is very simple and very clear: the NMRA must remain impartial, so ***Do Not*** place campaign statements supporting one candidate over another on ***any*** NMRA media platform. If you want to make statements on your personal media platforms, such as on your Facebook or Twitter accounts, that's fine and dandy. Go for it. We don't have a say in that.

As soon as someone shares that page to an NMRA platform, that's a different matter entirely, and the NMRA *cannot* and *does not* permit that. The post will be deleted by NMRA media folks, which will probably cause wails of "censorship," but the NMRA must remain impartial for the electoral process to work.

The same process holds true for campaigning in any NMRA publications, including those at the Division level. No editorial comments, no "Vote for A" statements, and so on. It is equally valid for any email coming from an NMRA official or platform. We must remain impartial.

Why is this so important? Our elections follow the general format that you see in your local, regional, and national civil elections, but with a major difference that is not immediately apparent to a casual observer. In a civic election, the candidates are trying to garner a place to represent you with the ability to cause all sorts of funding and other processes to happen that benefit their specific constituencies. In an NMRA election, the successful candidate will represent the NMRA as a whole, not any specific constituency.

Every National Board member represents *every* NMRA member, worldwide. Let me repeat that: *every* National Board member represents *every* NMRA member, worldwide. There are no constituencies, no issues with "our voice on the Board," and so forth. The Board is a global Board, charged with representing the best interests of the organization, worldwide. Every single Board member, whether from your local operating group or another country on another continent, represents you as a member of the NMRA. They're working hard to ensure that the NMRA thrives and that, as a result, your hobby becomes more educational, more interesting, and more fun. They're giving up their hobby



**2019 May**

## **President's Report Continued**

time to help you. So.... I've said this before, and will say it again: we need the electoral process to remain impartial.

As long as I'm on this subject, please give some thought to whether or not you're injecting local, regional, or national political statements into the NMRA as well, because... you guessed it, we need to remain impartial. I'm aware of an instance where a Division superintendent wore a shirt with a highly charged political statement to a Division meeting. Although this was probably unintentional, the damage was done, and several members were offended. Simply put, this was inappropriate and should be discontinued immediately. We must remain impartial.

So, there you have it. We're trying hard to keep the electoral processes as open, member-friendly, and successful as we can to attract the best candidates to help run this global association. The more successful we are at that, the better your organization becomes. Please help us make this work! Impolitic politics have no place in the process. We must remain im-

partial!

High Green!



### **Corrections**

I have erred! My Atlanta Meeting editorial identified Jim Gore, MMR®, as the Eastern District Director (EDD); he is not. That honor goes to Bob Hamm, MMR®. Jim is the At-Large North American Director (ALNAD). Haste makes waste....

I regret the error. And all that said, both gentlemen, irrespective of labeled seats, represent *all* NMRA members worldwide and do so quite well.

Another error for the Atlanta Board meeting summary was an error of omission. I failed to acknowledge the efforts of the Piedmont Division, whose members, spearheaded by Superintendent Walt Liles, provided a dinner and transportation to several area model railroads on Saturday evening after the Board of Directors Meeting. The railroads were all gems, the hospitality was that typically associated with "Southern Hospitality," and all the participating Board members and Department Heads appreciate their efforts. Thank you all!

**2019 May**

**Gary Jordan earned Master Model Railroader 626.**



If you want to find a woman who is passionate about model railroading and a skilled model railroader to boot, look no farther than northwest Chicagoland's Fox Valley Division of the NMRA. There you will find Gail Ericksen at practically all the Division's monthly meetings along with her husband, Gordy. But Gail is no "tag-along" model railroader's wife. I found this out when visiting her and Gordy's railroad, the HO-scale Milwaukee Road-Southwest Division.

The Ericksens had invited me to see their railroad several times, but I had not yet made the drive over to their home in rural McHenry County, Illinois, until recently. After promising them for the third time that I'd visit, I reckoned I'd better follow through or never be asked again. Two surprises awaited me at the Ericksen home: a large, excellent 40x60-foot model railroad in the making, and model railroader Gail Ericksen. Both surprises blew me away. The Ericksens' model railroad was the first surprise. Upon entering their spacious unfinished basement, I could immediately see something special was being built there. I really had no idea that they were building such a large, high-quality, prototype-inspired layout. The layout was about 20 percent complete with all the benchwork and the main staging yard

complete. About 75 percent of the main line was laid and operational, and 50 or so structures were finished and on the layout as well. All construction was first rate thanks in part to the help of professional layout builder and Ericksen friend, Darren Ferreter from Cedar Rapids, Iowa.

The biggest surprise of the day though was Gail. She was, in fact, a bona fide, hardcore model railroader! Yes, I shamefully admit, I'd always thought of her as a sweet, dutiful, "model railroader's wife" attending our Fox Valley Division meets in support of her husband. In reality, she is at the meets supporting her husband, yes, but she is also there for herself to learn more about model and prototype railroading, about which she is passionate about. Gail's interest in trains was sparked as a girl growing up in Moorhead, Minnesota. Both the Great Northern and Northern Pacific railroads had a presence in Moorhead, and Gail's dad worked right across from the GN depot. She enjoyed watching the railroad in action whenever she visited her dad at work. Her brother had a 4x8 Lionel layout for a short time — her introduction to model trains.

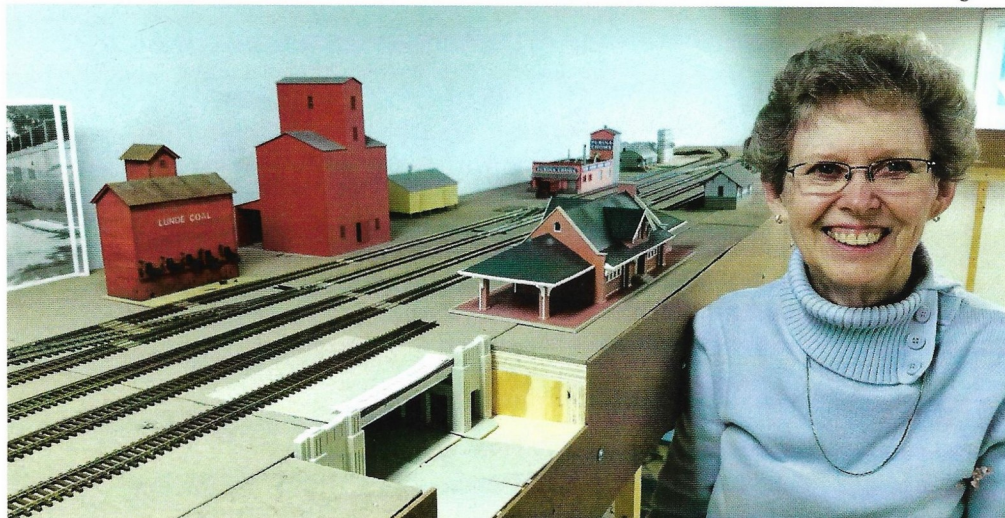
After graduating high school, Gail's interest in trains laid dormant until she began to date Gordy in 1989. She and Gordy were both members of the same church and

were divorced when they started dating. Gordy had no idea Gail had a latent interest in trains when he asked her out. One of their first dates was going to a train show in Madison, Wisconsin, which Gail thoroughly enjoyed. She then joined Gordy on various layout visits and op sessions he attended in his informal "Narrow Gauge Circle" group. Though she was invited by the wives to have coffee and cookies upstairs, Gail would politely decline and head downstairs to be with the model railroaders. There, Gail said, "I asked a million questions about the layout and its operations. I still do this today!" Gail was getting hooked on the hobby.

One thing led to another, and soon Gordy and Gail were married. They honeymooned in Colorado by taking Amtrak to Glenwood Springs and then visited the Durango & Silverton narrow gauge tourist railroad. Two years later, they went to see the Cumbres & Toltec tourist railroad. After a decade or so, it was time to design and build their dream house and dream model railroad basement, which they did in 2007. As big as their basement is, Gordy decided to abandon his desire to model Colorado narrow gauge railroading and instead began thinking about a layout based on the railroad of his childhood in Iowa, the Milwaukee Road's Southwestern Division. "As much as I like the Colorado narrow gauge railroads, it just seemed like too big of a project for me — too many

big mountains and all those wood trestles," says Gordy. This suited Gail just fine since researching the Iowa line would be easier due to its proximity. And research she did. "[Modeling this railroad] is history, and it is fascinating to me," says Gail. Of course, she asked a lot of questions and then began researching maps and books and taking several trips to Iowa with Gordy to see the railroad for herself. When I toured the Ericksens' model railroad, it was Gail who led the tour. She was a fount of

*Below: Gail Ericksen standing next to the town of Washington, Iowa, on her and husband Gordy's Milwaukee Road-Southwest Division layout. Gail built all of the structures in Washington.*







*Above:* Gail Ericksen at her workbench with some of the notes she's taken on the models she's built.

information about what was being modeled, what wasn't being modeled, how the railroad would seek to replicate the operations of the real thing, and the various compromises that would have to be made on the railroad.

The structures on the Ericksen layout were all built by Gail from kits or by kitbashing several kits. She has a large workbench complete with tools, jigs, paints, and so forth. She is an organized and meticulous builder. She reads the instructions and takes detailed notes about the process of building each structure. She records the paint used on each structure for future reference and keeps a log of all the structures she has built and when. Gail is also an accomplished artist and cannot wait to start scenery on their layout. "I think scenery is going to be great fun, and I can't wait to get started with that part of building the layout," she says enthusiastically. Enthusiasm is probably one of the best words to describe Gail's involvement with the hobby of model railroading and the NMRA. One of her structures recently placed second in our Division's monthly modeling contest, and she was thrilled.

However, Gail considers the people she's met to be the biggest thrill in the hobby. "I've met so many interesting people," she says, "and they are always so willing to share what they know." And because of that, Gail Erickson is an accomplished NMRA model railroader. 📷



I can still hear my mother, “Don’t play with your brother’s trains!”

My brother Jim was only allowed to set up his Lionel trains in the basement from Thanksgiving until New Year’s Day. I watched my 9-year-old brother with intense fascination as he drew a track plan that would fit on a pingpong table and a couple of other tables. I watched as he put the track sections, turnouts, rolling stock, and structures together that would become the layout. The growing anticipation of when track power would be connected to the massive control box that would move the locomotives was overwhelming.

Little did my brother realize that I memorized exactly not only how to run the trains, but also where every car and locomotive was spotted. When he was not home, I would sneak down to the basement and run the trains to my absolute delight. Afterward, I put everything back exactly as I had found it. It was not until I had kids of my own that I finally confessed to him of my deeds.

Growing up outside Philadelphia, I was exposed to prototype trains. My grandparents lived one block from the four-track Pennsylvania Railroad main line with commuter trains and big GG-1 locomotives zooming by. How wonderful! After high school, I joined the rush hour crowd and commuted to work on the Media Line daily into downtown Philly.

When I met my late husband Ross Allen, I realized very quickly that he was a “train nut.” His invitation to come back to his place to see his trains did not mean what I initially thought it meant. He did, indeed, have a very large N-scale layout, but without any structures. After we married, I found that I enjoyed assembling and painting buildings. Then I tried, and succeeded, in scratchbuilding structures for the NTRAK modules we built.

The year 1983 was a big change for us. We built an addition to our home to hold our future HO-scale layout called the West Virginia Northern. Ross was very adamant that this was going to be a joint project, and I was a full partner. We shared lots of the work, but Ross would do the benchwork, trackwork, electrical wiring, and overhead lighting. I would do all

the scenery, structures, rolling stock, and handle operating sessions. The WVN was cutting edge for its time, operating with a dispatcher, telephone headsets, and early digital control of engines.

In 1990, there was another big change for us. We started RAILSERVE, a custom model railroad business. Model railroad-ing was not a hobby anymore. It was now a business. It was not easy to manage a relationship in a marriage as well as in a business situation, but we did it with the same understanding that each of us contributes equally. We built and installed many fabulous model railroads all over the United States. We collaborated on the layout designs so that the track plans and scenery worked together, both functionally and artistically. I did scenery of the Rockies, rolling hillsides of the Midwest, Appalachian Mountains, city scenes, and bridges/water in the Florida Keys. The HO-scale Florida East Coast layout was highlighted in Allen Keller Productions *Great Model Railroads, Vol. 41*.

I have been a member of the NMRA since 1973, attending many Sunshine Region meets, several National Conventions, and for the last 19 years, Prototype Rails in Cocoa Beach, Florida. I have presented so many clinics over the years that I have lost count. The opportunity to share my experience and techniques, and, in turn, to be inspired by other clinician presentations cannot be overstated. I encourage everyone to join and participate in NMRA activities to improve your modeling skills. It was no surprise that I became involved in the Master Model Railroader program. I was well on my way to becoming the first woman MMR, but RAILSERVE slowed me down because the business came first. I did become MMR No. 349 in 2005.

An article on the WVN was scheduled to be published in *Model Railroader* Magazine in 2002 but was delayed until June 2005 because of the unexpected death of Ross in 2002. His death turned my world upside down. I was not sure what the next chapter of my life was going to be. What would become of the West Virginia Northern? Would I marry again and to

whom? Maybe someone in my sailboat racing circle or diving buddies? I was not sure I wanted to marry another model railroader.

I married Greg Komar in 2004, and, yes, he is a model railroader. I wondered about my sanity. Why would I do that again? I was married for 30 wonderful years to Ross who lived and thought almost all the time about trains. However, the truth comes out when I make myself realize that, believe it or not, I’m also a “train nut.”

Greg and I have traveled around the country riding and watching trains. When approaching a railroad crossing, we always hope the gates will go down so that we can see the train pass. For the last 15 years, I have been a member of Largo Central Railroad, a live steam club, so I even get to drive and ride model trains!

Greg helped me move the WVN (which was so much a part of my life) to our home in Tampa, Florida. After building a 30x35-foot addition, and with a lot of help from 54 friends, we moved the very large pieces of the WVN to our home. Now it was up to us to reassemble the WVN. Greg built new lighting over the layout, created photo backdrops, handled locomotive painting, custom WVN lettering, and sound decoder installations. I removed all the original wiring under the layout and rewired the layout to current best practices to support DCC and sound decoders. I developed a new skill set by handlaying Code 83, 70, and 55 rail and scratchbuilding six turnouts for a new 5-foot addition to the original layout. After doing six turnouts, building another 60 was no big deal, and it was needed for a new double-ended three-level staging area.

Together we’ve enjoyed opening “our” railroad to Special Interest Groups, visitors from the 2017 NMRA National Convention, and most especially to our many good friends who join us regularly for operating sessions. It continues to be a thrill to watch new visitors go dumbstruck for a few moments when first entering the railroad room.

If the WVN had not been moved, a new generation of model railroaders might not have been introduced to model rail-

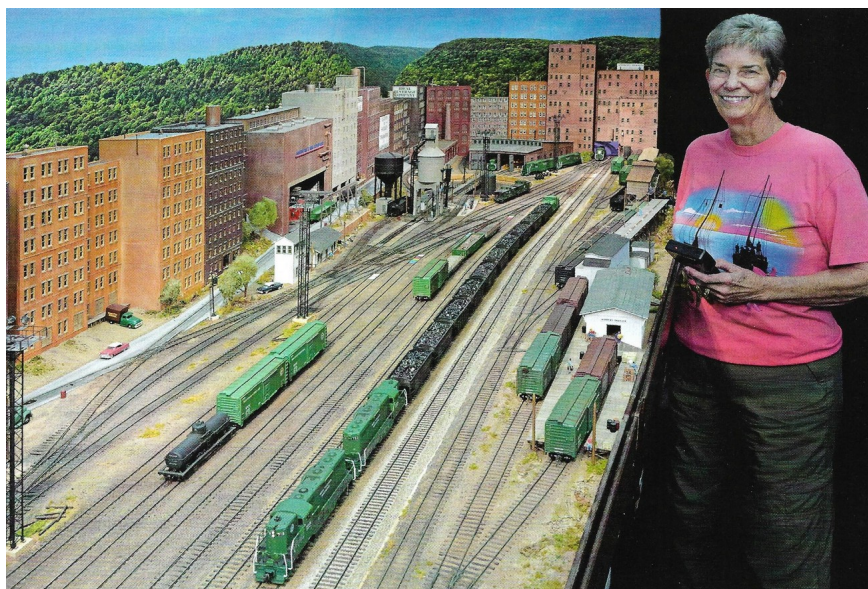


**2019 June**

**GAIL ALLEN KOMAR Cont.**

roading. My grandson Ben, now 12 years old, usually gives us a quick hug when visiting, then makes a beeline to the train room, where he joyfully disappears for hours at a time. During the “reconstruction,” he became a very valuable “quality control expert” as he ran trains over all the trackwork to see if everything worked. As the years have gone by, his questions have moved from how to operate it, to spending time under the layout, looking, studying, and asking questions of what makes it work.

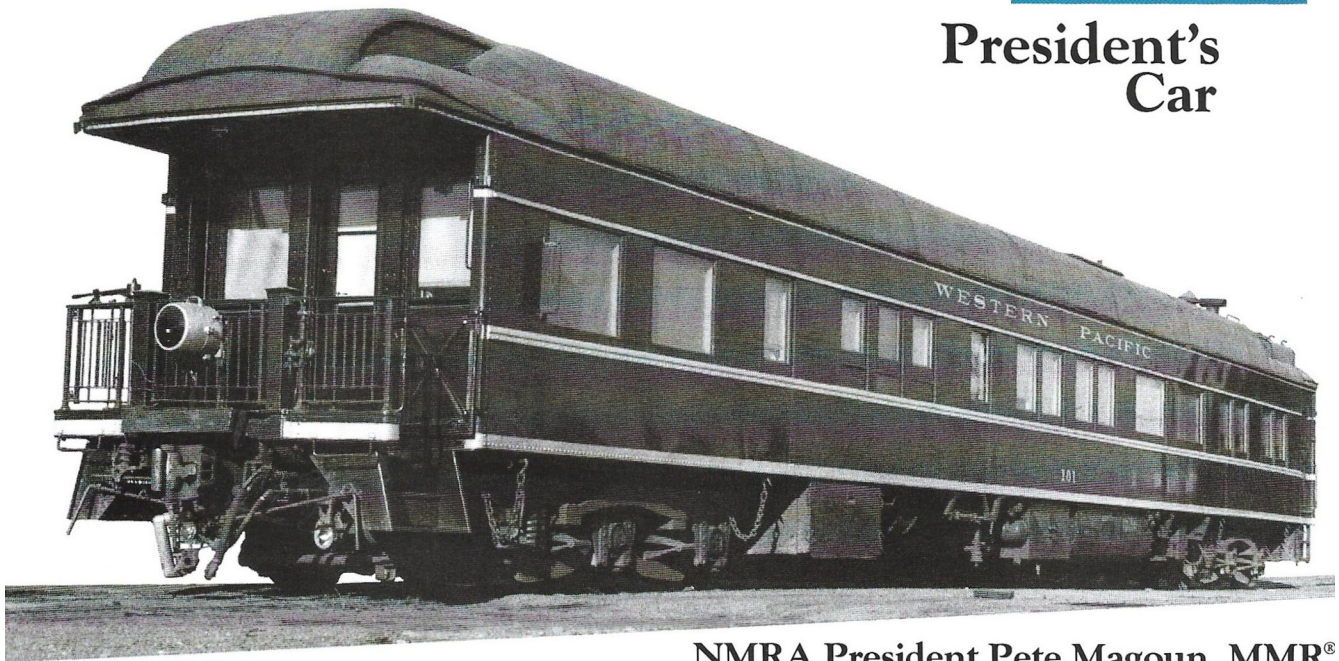
When I reflect on the history of the West Virginia Northern, I could have never imagined what transpired. I am reminded how fortunate I am to have been able to share such a wonderfully diverse and rewarding hobby as model railroading with my first husband, Ross. And now years later, I am blessed yet again to share that passion with Greg. There are so few husband-and-wife teams in this hobby today. How lucky we both are, indeed. 🚂



**John Paganoni earned Master Model Railroader 615.**



## President's Car



**NMRA President Pete Magoun, MMR®**

### Change as a Constant

**W**hen I was a kid, I was told “The only thing that’s permanent is change.” This sounded strange to a little kid, but the phrase was catchy. I kept hearing it from the grown-ups, and it stuck. Now, decades later, I can see the wisdom here. And yes, we have changes yet again within the NMRA.

The first of these is within the Standards & Conformance Department, where S&C Manager Didrik Voss, MMR®, has asked to retire. Di has done the job for more than a decade, and done it well. We will miss his wisdom and insight. I have appointed Carl Smeigh to replace him. Carl is a retired US Navy Captain who understands Standards & Conformance. He was ordered to a shipyard decades ago, found piles of steel plate stacked up, turned those plates into a nuclear submarine, commissioned her, took her to sea for a year, and then moved onward and upward. In our little world, he’s finishing off his MMR® and happily modeling HO-scale Colorado Narrow

Gauge from his home in Florida. He has worked with the National Contest team for several years (see the “S&C” influence in there?), and expects to continue to do so as time permits. Although the turnover is underway now, he’ll formally relieve Di Voss at the Board Meeting in Salt Lake City, Utah. Please introduce yourself and

welcome him aboard when you see him.

National Nominating Committee Chair Tony Koester has also asked to retire from that position to free up some time to deal with some Nickel Plate Historical Society opportunities that have materialized. Tony founded the NKPHS decades ago, and it’s a pas-



**Above: Mike Brestel (left) received a President’s Award from Pete Magoun, MMR® during the recent BOD meeting in Atlanta, Georgia. — Robert Amsler photo**



## 2019 July

sion of his. I have asked Mike Brestel to step up as Nominating Committee Chair, which he will do at the Salt Lake City convention when his Board of Director term concludes.

And speaking of Mike Brestel, his term on the Board of Directors comes to an end in Salt Lake City. Mike is a stalwart NMRA volunteer, and his “corporate memory” is profound. We’ll miss his counsel and advice and wish him well in his “retirement,” which, of course, I just complicated by asking him to be the Nominating Committee Chair. Mike also works the calendar and the NMRA insurance programs, so he’ll stay involved with the organization and busy, which is good.

And that brings me to Elections. We have a regularly scheduled election coming up, and it will run the “normal” course for a Spring 2020 vote. But change being constant, we’ll also run a Special Election in a condensed format very shortly. As you may know, the Western District Director position on the National Board of Directors was voted on during the recent election. The winner of that seat has determined that he cannot serve the term and has resigned from the Board effective at the Salt Lake City BOD meeting.

After discussion of a number of possibilities with the Board of Directors and NMRA General Counsel, I have decided that leaving the decision to the Western District membership is the best course of action and have called for a Special Election (for only the Western District) to fill the WDD seat for the full three-year term. Your Board of Directors has endorsed the action. Secretary Rick Coble has included a summary of the process elsewhere in the magazine (see page 9); notifications will go out in the *EBULLETIN* and “snail mail” as we progress. We will use both electronic and paper ballots, so look for them! This is a condensed time frame, so those of you in the Western District please pay attention! Should you wish to stand for the seat, please follow Rick’s instructions!

And, as much as I don’t want to have to write this down, I need to say it yet again: Please remember the NMRA policy on using NMRA media for campaign purposes... *Don’t do it!* The NMRA must remain impartial!

On to Salt Lake City!

High Green!



## July 2019

**Shelly Levy earned Master Model Railroader 627.**

**Albert Churella earned Master Model Railroader 630.**

**Dennis Ivison earned Master Model Railroader 636.**



2019 July

# Women in Model Railroading

Mary Barstow, MMR®

Reported by James Keena, Chief Clerk Paymaster Los Angeles Division

The Los Angeles Division, at its recent February 23, 2018, general membership meeting and banquet, honored Mary Barstow, MMR® 292 with the Los Angeles Division Lifetime Achievement Award for her long-term volunteering and commitment to promoting the hobby of model railroading. As with most, her fascination with model railroading began with her father's Lionel train set, which he brought home in the 1940s. This Lionel set was frequently spread out all over the dining room floor. Along with her two younger brothers, she had great operating sessions with that Lionel train set that usually ended with major disagreements and dented cars.

Later in life, when she was married, eight-months pregnant, and bored, she decided to build her first N-scale model railroad layout. She did this almost 40 years ago while living in Glendale, California. She often visited the local hobby shop on San Fernando Road for her model railroad supplies for her new railroad empire.

Life then led her and her husband Paul to a move to Palos Verdes Peninsula where she switched to HO scale since her preference was assembling and detailing Campbell's western-style building kits. The owner of the local hobby shop on Artesia Boulevard informed her that she now lived in the area surrounded by other model railroaders.

Her third and current HO-scale layout fills an 11x14-foot bedroom. Refinements continue to be done regularly on the Palos Verdes Pacific. Structures are her favorite part of the hobby. She has been known to rip out passing sidings to accommodate more buildings. Fine Scale Miniatures detailed museum-quality kits are a passion; she is always on the lookout for them to build and add to her collection.

In addition to her HO layout, garden railroading became an interest. Currently, there are about 500 feet of track that wraps



Photo by Mona Raymer

around the entire backyard. Holding open houses in conjunction with convention layout tours when both layouts are operating can be an exciting experience.

Mary joined the LA Division of the NMRA in 1980 and immediately became active in the organization. As part of the NMRA, she met many new friends. She volunteered for the 1982 Regional Pasadena Rose Special Convention and assisted Charley Hepperle with the *LA Coupler*, which led to being the editor for six years followed by Division Superintendent and Director. While serving as Publicity Chairman for two National Conventions, Mary photographed and wrote articles that appeared in the *NMRA BULLETIN*, *Garden Railways*, *Railroad Model Craftsman*, *Railmodel Journal*, *Model Railroading*, and *O Scale News*.

She began working with the Achievement Program in 1990. Choices had to be made from each of four different categories, thus providing the opportunity

to learn skills outside her comfort area. The AP forces one to go and try other areas of the hobby. Mary completed Volunteer, Scenery, Engineer, Electrical, Author, Dispatcher, Cars, and Elected Official over what turned out to be a ten-year effort. She became Master Model Railroader® 292 in 2000. The encouragement and support of both family and friends made this achievement possible.

Mary joined the NMRA when it became evident that model railroading was slated to become a serious hobby. As time went by, she learned that her efforts were repaid many times over with incredible experiences. Lifetime friendships have been made, and these are the most worthwhile. Many people ask, "what has the NMRA done for me lately?" According to Mary, you have to be willing to put something into it to get something out!

Mary Barstow expressed a deepest thank you to the National Model Railroad Association for 40 wonderful years!



## 2019 August Women in Model Railroading **GAIL YARNALL**

I never thought of becoming a model railroader. As a kid, I helped Dad set up my brothers' O-gauge Christmas trains but, it was just a thing to do. All my young life, railroading was a family topic. Rock Island was the family line: my grandfather was head telegrapher in Kansas City on the Rock, and my mother worked as a telephone operator for the Rock to make money for college. Mom and Dad rode the Rock when they went to school and when they were courting. Despite it being a family road, I just wasn't into trains. It apparently was in the bloodline, and I was just a slow starter. In my 50s, I went to a couple of train shows and soon was asking questions of vendors, exhibitors, and attendees. When I finally "met" the suitcase layouts, I boarded the modeling train.

I'm Gail Yarnall of Mid-Central Region, Division 3. Roadblocks don't normally stop me, but there can be quite a few roadblocks in model railroading, especially for women. I looked at several clubs, hoping to join. Some did not want a female who did anything but bake cookies and maybe paint some model houses. Others were okay with females but not working on track, wiring, or the other "man" things. I am very willing to pay my dues working the jobs that no one wants but, in return, I expect to be able to learn and grow, using that learning to serve the club better. It takes a special group to be able to foster women in railroading. Eight years ago, I met the members of Division 3 at a brand-new event called "TRAINing Day." It is a free all-day introduction to the public of various aspects of model railroading, as well as a day to help current modelers hone their skills.

Almost six years ago, I met my wonderful husband of two years. Dana had been a member of the NMRA for 12 years. He gave me an NMRA membership as a gift when we were dating — best gift ever! Our first National Convention was in Atlanta. I had a blast going to every clinic I could, going on the tours, and talking to people. When we went to our first MCR Division 3 meeting, I expressed my interest in helping. Since then, I have done all kinds of events and projects. To me, that's fun!

One of my most challenging times was when Division 3 lost our train show venue 109 days before our huge (84,000 square foot) annual train show. July/August is a time when everyone is out of town for a break before preparing for the November show. I had worked the show doing various small jobs for a few years, but this was my first year as registrar, and I was the only person in town! It took me a month and 73 possible locations before a friend put me onto a place — a mall with a large empty store.

We got the building, but then the job was to revamp the whole show in about 80 days, moving from a large building with big open rooms to a smaller building that twisted and turned like a maze and was chopped up with dressing rooms, offices, and storage rooms. Measuring the spaces was murder. We could measure a dozen times and come up with different figures. We tried laser measure, tape, the wheel, and the floor tiles. The walls were not square — they curved. I made a flat target to stand on the floor and a mount for the laser measure so that we could circumvent the walls. Great idea, but in the end, we still had to incorporate some SWAG planning to finish. The show was great, and my husband (who was the floorplan manager) and I were awarded the Wendefur Award for our efforts to save the show. Such a great honor. Since then, we have had two more moves of the train show and one move of TRAINing Day (still going strong after eight years). Finally, this year, we found a home for both events — no more being the "gypsy" Division of NMRA.

I still don't seem to get much modeling done. I have done two suitcase layouts (such fun!) and some dioramas and have placed in several contests. My first T-TRAK module is just finished, and I am an enthusiast. Currently, I am working on an N-scale teaching module. My style is a bit different. I make each portion "speak" to the others. There is interaction everywhere with lots of detail. For our home layout, Four Rivers, my road is Rock Island, and my husband does Santa Fe.



The layout is currently in the planning stage with the benchwork from his house disassembled and on the basement floor until the plan is done. I model N and HO currently, but I love all kinds of trains.

My favorite item is my second suitcase. It is a cut-away of how to make a suitcase layout. All the steps are shown, either in the built part or in the lid, which is designed as an open book with some of the hidden steps to suitcase-making portrayed. It goes from an open hole on the right side, showing wiring, to foam, and then onto a fully finished area on the left. The train runs on a reversing polarity track going back and forth from the least finished edge on the front to the least finished edge on the back. Anything I can do to teach/reach the public is my passion.

Currently, I am Assistant Superintendent of MCR Division 3, and I love being a part of this supportive, caring group. The greatest thing about being a part of the NMRA is the people I meet and the encouragement I receive. I want to do the same for prospective members and new members because model railroading is so diverse — it can use any talent from anyone and create a thing of beauty. Hopefully, I will have lots of opportunities to continue to improve and to help others to grow in model railroading and life. The fact that it is fun is just icing on the cake! 🍰



# Announcing the 2019 award winners for service to their Division

By Gerry Leone, MMR® NMRA Vice President / Special Projects

**U**nsung heroes. Every Region has some, and most Divisions have at least one. These are the men and women who give of themselves to help their fellow Division members get more out of the NMRA. Sometimes it involves extra time, sometimes it involves extra money, but it always involves extra effort. They don't do it for the glory, but for the betterment of their Division. These are the individuals the NMRA President's Award for Service to the Division is meant to honor.

This year is the third year this special honor was awarded, with NMRA President Pete Magoun announcing their names at the Saturday evening banquet at the Salt Lake City convention. The recipients were chosen by the NMRA National Board members and officers, along with each Region's President, most of whom consulted with their Division Superintendents or Presidents.

We're extremely proud to share the names of this year's recipients of the award, with information from the individuals who nominated them:

**Alan Harris (Australasian Region)** – Alan is currently the Superintendent for the North Coast Division of New South Wales, and has served in that position for several years. He's extremely active in recruiting new members at train displays and shows, which usually last two to three days, paying his own expenses to be there.

**Mike Hughes (British Region)** – As the British Region's Marketing Coordinator, Mike has made his South East Surrey, Kent, East and West Sussex Division more effective, engaging and welcoming. From preparing posters and negotiating discounts for members, to coordinating multi-national trips and getting national publicity for the NMRA, Mike has taken his job personally and done "beyond-the-call-of-duty" work for the NMRA.

**Riley Triggs (Lone Star Region)** – A member of the Region's Division 4, for the last seven years Riley has been the editor of The Marker Lamp, taking the newsletter

from a printed 20-page flyer to a 50+ full-color electronic version. Besides investing his free time in publishing the news of the local NMRA, Riley co-chaired an extremely successful Lone Star Region convention last year.

**Richard Briggs, MMR® (Mid-Central Region)** – Richard is a volunteer's volunteer. In his early years he held several different offices and roles of the Region's Buckeye Division, including Superintendent. After serving terms in Regional offices, Richard returned to Division service, chairing a major convention along with serving as Assistant Superintendent, as mentor for new Division officers, as Achievement Program manager, and as Boy Scout Program manager.

**Dave Salamon (Mid-Continent Region)** – Visitors are sometimes surprised that Tulsa, OK, is such a hotbed of model railroad activities. It's thanks to the Indian Nations Division's super, Dave Salamon. Dave's been in charge of the Division for 12 years, brings in nationally known speakers for Division meets, produces its newsletter, and coordinates an "op-till-you-drop" weekend for locals and those coming in from out of state.

**Howard Kaplan (Mid-Eastern Region)** – In the words of the person who nominated him, "Howard is a dynamo of the Philadelphia Division." He was elected to the Division's Board in 2011 and continues to serve as its treasurer. In 2016 he added the Division's webmaster hat to his head, and later that year became co-editor of the Division's newsletter. Two years later he became its sole editor. In addition, he volunteers at not only his own Division events, but those of other Divisions.

**Marion Brasher, MMR® (Midwest Region)** – In his early years as an NMRA member, Marion helped found the Illinois Valley Division, which grew and spawned two other Divisions. When the IVD fell on hard times in later years, Marion once again was instrumental in re-establishing the Division, serving multiple terms as its

Superintendent, and building it back to its original size. Along the way he's been an invaluable mentor to members of all skill levels.

**Peter Nesbitt (Niagara Frontier Region)** – Peter served as the first Superintendent of the St. Lawrence Division and has worked tirelessly for it ever since. He's helped members of all skill levels get more out of the hobby by presenting innumerable clinics and serving as photographer for members with articles destined for major publications. In addition, he served as the Achievement Program chair for 16 years, traveling throughout the Region to members' homes for evaluations.

**Eddie Allen (North Central Region)** – At the heart of the Three Rivers Division you'll find Eddie Allen. He served on the Division's Executive Board for 20 years, and continues to donate his talents by shooting videos of all Division presentations and op sessions for the Division's video library.

**Ray Howard (Northeastern Region)** – Ray Howard served as Superintendent of the Lakeshores Division for 10 years, only recently stepping down from that role. He was a driving force behind the Division's successful initiative to move from the Niagara Frontier Region to the Northeastern Region in 2017, and has edited the Division's newsletter for the last four years, all the while continuing as an impactful mentor to others.

**Doug Wagner (Pacific Coast Region)** – The Daylight Division owes a lot to Doug, who has taken on almost every position available. He's one of the few members who consistently participates in each of the far-flung Division events, and drives other locals to them. He presents clinics, chairs meetings, organizes events, and is a cheerleader for the entire Division.

**W. Gene Swanson, MMR® (Pacific Northwest Region)** – Gene has served the Region's Fourth Division for over 25 years in a variety of roles, most importantly, as manager of the Tacoma Clinic, an event that routinely draws over 50 attendees and



## **2019 August      2019 Award Winners Service to Division Cont.**

introduces new modelers to the NMRA. Under his direction the Clinic has become a major educational outlet for the Division. In the words of the person who nominated him, "he exemplifies the kind of member we would all like to become, in the highest tradition of NMRA service."

### **Don Vest (Pacific Southwest Region)**

– In the Arizona Division, it's Don who makes things happen without being asked. He consistently opens his heart and time to share the hobby, and has a take-charge attitude that helps provide greater interest in the hobby to both young and old. He currently serves as the Division's Membership Chair, and co-chair on the Regional convention hosted by the Division.

**Andrew Saez (Rocky Mountain Region)** – Andrew's been a Board member of the Silver San Juan Division for almost a decade. He helps plan Division activities, assists with setup and tear-down of events, shoots photographs of events, and even brings refreshments. He's open, friendly and makes new attendees feel welcome.

### **Gary Jarabek (Southeastern Region)**

– Gary is a stalwart of the Piedmont Division. Having served as a two-term director, he currently manages the Division's apparel sales. His largest responsibility is chairing the annual Piedmont Pilgrimage, an 80+ layout open house event lasting six weeks. He also edits and distributes the Pilgrimage's comprehensive guide and makes sure layout hosts have assistants.

### **Richard Segall (Sunshine Region)**

– Gilbert's been an exemplary leader of the Northern Division, and in the Region as a whole. He continues to help host Division activities on a regular basis and works to educate members about the hobby. In the words of the Region's past president, "Richard represents what the NMRA is all about."

### **Miles Rohan (Thousand Lakes Region)**

– Miles is the only surviving founding member of the Prairie Lakes Division. Each year at Christmas he opens his home layout to the general public, and hosts many operating sessions there throughout the season. He's known for single-handedly taking a huge display layout to the Clay County Fairgrounds – the largest county fair in the world – to both publicize the hobby and the NMRA. In addition he's served on the Region's Board in a number of positions.

## **2019 August**

**Russ Norris earned Master Model Railroader 638.**

## **2019 September**

**Martin Brechbiel earned Master Model Railroader 638.**



## 2019 September Women in Model Railroading: **Connie Coy**

**T**raveling the road (or, in this case, the rails) less traveled, again. It seems that a lot of my life has been spent showing interest in fields or hobbies that historically have been male-dominated. I worked in a male-dominated profession. It has never made any difference to me. I enjoy what I enjoy, and that's that.

My interest in model railroading began as a young child when my brother received an S-scale train set as a Christmas gift. I think I enjoyed that set more than my brother did. Of course, back in those days and times, it was unheard of for a girl to receive a train set or be interested in one.

Lionel did manufacture a pink train set way back when attempting to entice girls into the hobby. I never knew about this pink train set until I was an adult. I would not have cared for the pink trains, though. I admired realistic-looking trains like the ones that rolled through my home state of Nebraska with billboard boxcars and both steam and later diesel engines. (A side note, those original "pink" sets are highly collectible. If you happen to have one of those sets, you are sitting on a big stack of cash!)

My story, exactly like every guy's story, is pretty much the same when it comes to the trains. I was always fascinated and intrigued by trains, whether real or model. However, life got in the way with education, a move to Florida with my parents, higher education, formal training, and starting my career. Then quite a coincidence occurred.

One evening in April 1991, I met my future husband, John, at the Indianapolis Museum of Art. It was a very chance meeting. We had a whirlwind courtship that we



both would not advise anyone else ever to do. We met on April 5, were engaged three weeks later, and married in August. We are approaching 30 years of marriage, so we both guess it worked out. If that wasn't crazy enough, here is where the trains enter into our story.

On our honeymoon, we were walking through some small shops in Nashville, Indiana. By chance, we happened upon an HO-scale GP35 engine with the road name Atlantic Coast Line. It was at that moment we learned of our mutual affection for trains both model and real. We purchased that locomotive that same day and the rest, as they say, is history. And, yes, we still have that locomotive neatly displayed in a case at our home.

Our first layout was a really simple 8x6-foot set-up in the basement of our home. We didn't accomplish a lot — five months later, we found ourselves moving from Indianapolis to Billings, Montana.

The move to Montana was beneficial in many ways to us, including purchasing a home with a significantly larger basement. That, of course, led to a 16-foot long, 6-foot wide HO layout. After a short time, we added a yard. Then, somehow, the layout area expanded to 32 feet by 13 feet

— the largest layout either of us had ever owned to that point. I enjoyed learning about ballasting the tracks and especially completing several building models on that layout.

We also joined a modular group: The Yellowstone Valley Railway Club. We met so many wonderful people. Then, life happened again! After a little more than four years in Big Sky Country, we moved back home to Indiana in 1996.

We moved to a house without a basement — a mistake. We had a large "bonus" room in that house over the garage where we began building a layout, but the space was not "right" for the type of railroad we wanted. Although our enthusiasm was dampened, we kept dreaming.

It wasn't until 2005 when a tornado flung a giant trampoline from a neighbor's backyard at our windows that we got inspired to buy a home with a basement for safety (and train) purposes.

It was meant to be! We discovered an exceptionally large home less than two miles away that was double in size! The basement is roughly a 36x36-foot square area. The best part: nine-foot-tall ceilings! Much like our Montana basement, there was nothing down there except dust, cob-



## 2019 September Women in Model Railroading: **Connie Coy Cont.**

webs, concrete, and very few electrical outlets or overhead lighting. This was going to be a monumental undertaking.

By 2011, the basement had a multitude of overhead lights, 24 perimeter lights, and somewhere between 15 to 20 wall outlets not to mention dimmer switches for the perimeter lighting. There was also a secondary circuit breaker box for all the additional power in the basement. It took several years to complete all this work because my husband and I had many other commitments at the time.

In the interim, we had built our son an O-scale toy train layout in the corner of the basement for his first Lionel (Santa Fe) train set. We enjoyed running that set with him, including wiring and operating the accessories. However, we prefer the modeling that we had done with HO and wanted our layout to reflect some realistic area and operations. (And, yes, we did use his train set under our Christmas tree along with the annual Christmas boxcars we collected and a Christmas village.)

When it became time for the actual building of our dream layout featuring Montana's Glacier National Park, we had a decision to make. The massive size of O scale compared to HO made it easier to work with. Also, the quality and detail of O scale had changed so dramatically since our first model railroad that we chose to move to O scale from HO.

We had built several layouts before, but this one, soon to be named "The Glacier Line" was going to be completely unlike anything else we had ever modeled. Our goal was to take a 3-rail train, one that many still consider to be for under Christmas trees only and place it into a realistic setting — something seldom done. Our goal was to make it an outstanding layout on par with any 2-rail layout.

How successful were we? We are blessed and fortunate that The Glacier Line has been featured in the two top magazines of O scale. It was on the cover of one magazine and had two centerfold shots.

The Glacier Line has been professionally video recorded twice for worldwide distribution. It is the cover photo for one of the videos. It has been featured in the Great Northern Railway Historical Society's publication and has its own Facebook page and YouTube channel.

The layout has received widespread acclaim and praise. We appreciate all the kind words that we have received from visitors

and other sources. The Glacier Line is one huge piece of art. It is a lot of work and a lot of fun as well.

I continue to plan and think of ways to improve the layout. I have scratchbuilt several things and pieced together the Micro-engineering towers used on the Goat Lick Bridge that, by others' opinions, is the favorite spot to take photographs on the layout.

I have weathered a considerable number of pieces of rolling stock and structures. There is always a never-ending list of things to do on a layout, especially a layout that fills a 1,300-square-foot basement.

I enjoy our operating sessions with the Glacier Line Crew, and we are all involved with the Achievement Program. I'm currently working on the Dispatcher and Volunteer Certificates. We go to numer-

ous NMRA events and have operated our modular O-scale Timesaver layout at many of these events.

In closing, I just wanted to thank the magazine for including me in this series of articles about women in model railroading. However, I don't think of myself as anything other than just a model railroader who happens to be a woman. There are quite a few women in model railroading. One night on the Glacier Line had only a crew of women running the layout. Maybe that was a first, huh?

I hope someday to see the Glacier Line featured in this magazine because our greatest joy is sharing this great hobby with others.

*Your Fellow Model Railroader, Connie Coy* 📷





## 2019 September 2019 SALT LAKE CITY CONVENTION

*Below: Pictured below is about two-thirds of the Northern Utah Division host committee members (from left to right): Lowell Didas (Rail), Daland Spiers (UTA), Steve Moore (Clinics), Alan Anderson (Chair), Rick Luther (Graphics, Timetable), Keith Osojnak (Registration), Lou Anderson (Convention cars), Geoff Carter (hiding and Registration), Cindy Lund (Non-rail), Bill Hughes (Banquet), Jim Wanlass (Website). Seated is Rex Bailey (Silent Auction) Not shown is Charlie Treft (Co-Chairman, Silent Auction). There are numerous other volunteers not pictured who spent many hours to help host the NMRA 2019 SLC convention. Thank you all!  
— Gerry Leone, MMR® photo*



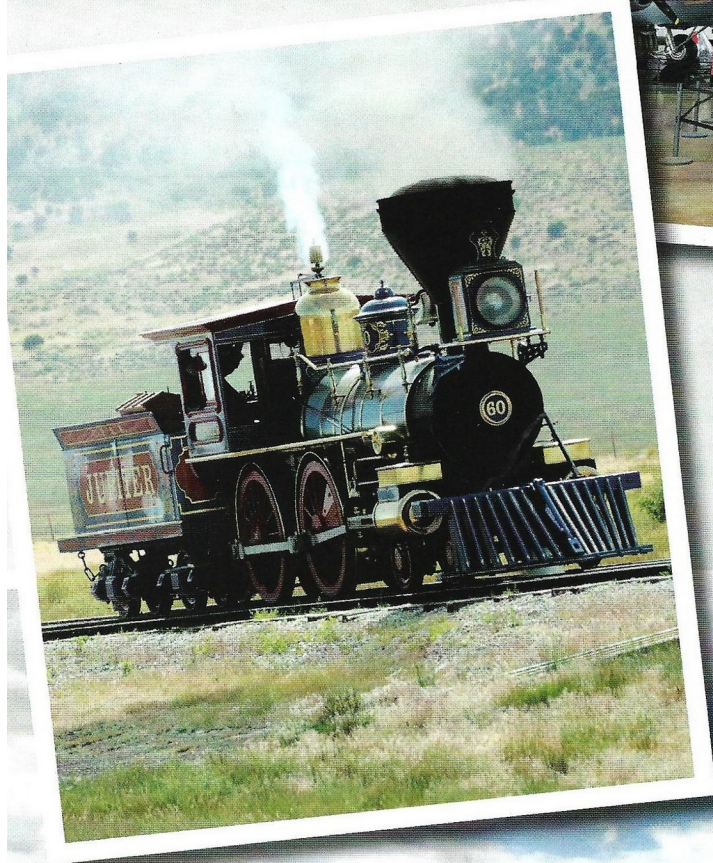
**Howard Goodwin, Peter Youngblood, Clark Kooning, Jim Gore  
Modeling with the Masters Crew pictured above.**



## Prototype Tours



*Above:* Tours included non-rail topics of interest, such as the impressive Hill Aerospace Museum. Cinthia managed to find a "train" connection here, though — a Douglas C-47B "Skytrain." — *Cinthia Priest photo*



*Left and below:* The tours to Promontory Summit included a re-enactment of the driving of the Golden Spike. Some convention-goers were called upon to play key participants in this historic event. — *Ken Liesse photo (left); Robert Feuerstein photo (below)*





**2019 September    2019 SALT LAKE CITY CONVENTION**



**Gordy Robinson sporting some “Scottish flair” along with Mark Lewalski at the National Train Show.**



**Bob Phelps (Center) received a Distinguished Service Award. He was the principal products design engineer for PECO from 1963 to 2016!**



## 2019 October Women in Model Railroading: Brenna Whitney

### I am a girl, and I play with trains

I want to introduce myself formally before I tell you my story. My name is Brenna Whitney. I study architecture at Roger Williams University, along with structural engineering and biology. I grew up in Derry, New Hampshire, but most importantly, I am a girl, and I play with trains.

This is where my story begins. Rather silly, actually, but my parents bought me a wooden Thomas the Tank Engine set at the age of three. After that fateful gifting, I caught the train bug and collected pretty much every wooden Thomas train between the time I was three and eight. I never put them down. My father made me a six-stall roundhouse, and I would empty the two large totes containing those wonderful wooden trains all over the living room floor to create a whole new world. I have vivid memories of making elaborate layouts in our living room with trains going under and over furniture. I also remember chasing our German Shepherd Molly out of the liv-

ing room when she would come in to say, "Hi." She never really understood why she couldn't play with me.

When I was eight years old, my parents took me to a train show. While walking around, we found the Youth in Model Railroading (YMR) run by Kim and Steve Lamb out of Lowell, Massachusetts. I joined at the show, and within the next month, I started going to their meetings. This was the beginning of what changed my life forever.

Within a year of joining the YMR, I had started my collection of HO-scale equipment, and I had built a module. My dad crafted the frame, my mother and grandmother helped me design the theme, and (with a little help) I did the scenery. It was a straight module, 2x4 feet, and I created a small farm complete with a farmhouse, bright red barn, greenhouse, and a paddock for cows and horses. With this module and my growing collection of cars and engines, my family and I went to trains shows: the HUB Division show in Marlboro, the Greenberg Toy and Train Show in Wilmington, and Amherst Railway Society Springfield Show.



Above: Me on the back of a caboose, Strasburg, Pennsylvania, July 2003. I was barely tall enough to see over the railing! — Holly Whitney photo

Outside modeling, my family and I traveled to New England locations that had trains. We visited the Wiscasset, Waterville & Farmington Railway Museum in Alna, Maine; Downeast Scenic Railroad in Ellsworth, Maine; Seashore Trolley Museum at Kennebunkport,

Below: Me dispatching on Bruce Robinson's layout, June 2019. I am obviously enjoying myself! Now, let's get some trains moving. — Bruce Robinson photo





## 2019 October Women in Model Railroading: Brenna Whitney Cont



*Left: In 2010, I spent a fair amount of time operating on Bruce's layout. Here, I am switching Essex Yard using car cards and waybills. What fun! — Bruce Robinson photo*

Maine; Conway Scenic Railroad in North Conway, New Hampshire; Hobo Railroad in Lincoln, New Hampshire; Essex Steam Train in Essex, Connecticut; and many more. What made me particularly excited was to ride steam engines. Even to this day, steam engines have this beauty to them that I can't resist.

My aspiration in life as a kid was to become an engineer — not an engineer like my parents, but a railroad engineer. I wish I could say that I never let go of my dream, but, in a way, I did; however, architecture does have something to do with my fascination with trains.

When I was 10, the YMR, in partnership with Bollinger Edgerly Scale Trains (BEST), created a contest for the kids to create a kit. We had to draw plans to scale, provide photos, and a little bit of history about the structure. The structure had to be simple enough that we could put it together with ease. While on vacation in Maine, I spotted a sail house across the river from a restaurant where we were dining. We took pictures and tried to get as close as possible to get measurements, but we couldn't. From the images, my dad and I drew HO-scale drawings. I did some research on sail houses, and I entered the contest.

At our yearly banquet at the Steaming Tender in Palmer, Massachusetts, BEST announced the winner; mine won! My kit went into production, and 100 kits were produced and sold. My family and I were

invited to see BEST's production. I got to visit Brian and Jill Bollinger at their house where they produced the kits. I was given my kit, and I got to choose any other kit I wanted in their stock.

With a little bit of my mother's help, I began building kits. I think the biggest thing my mom taught me was patience, something very difficult for a 10-year-old to grasp. I eventually figured it out. It did take several years, though.

Local modeler Bruce Robinson has been a mentor and an amazing friend to my family and me. Around the time I was 12 or 13, we were invited to Bruce's layout where he taught me how to operate trains. When I got the hang of it, my dad and I began attending Bruce's regular operating sessions on Friday nights once a month. Over the years, we got invited to other people's layouts as well. I celebrated nine years of operations on Bruce's layout in February 2019.

When I entered high school, I had the option to take career and technical education classes (CTE). While looking at the list, my mom saw architecture classes and asked if I was interested. I thought, "why not?" My freshman year of high school, I took Introduction to Computer-Aided Drafting and Introduction to Technical and Architectural Drafting. I really enjoyed those classes, and I was all set to begin taking Architecture 1 my junior year. In that class, I ate up anything that was sent my way. We spent nine months designing a

residential house. I did all the extra credit work on top of the requirements. My senior year, I continued with Architecture 2. In addition to our required three projects, my teacher, Mr. Voltaire, assigned two extra projects to me — one for my school when they were renovating the library, and another for Habitat for Humanity. The Habitat for Humanity project went cold after about a month, unfortunately, so nothing really came of it.

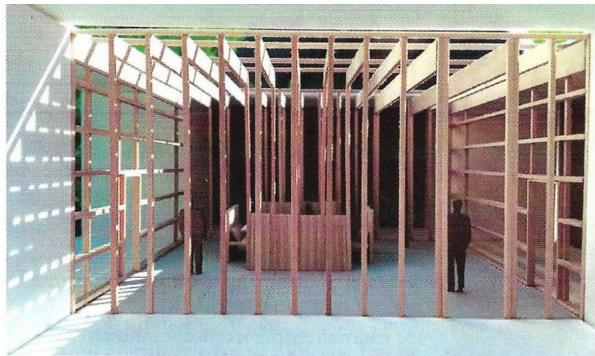
At Roger Williams University, I continued to push myself in architecture. What I find especially fun about studying architecture is that I get to build models. Building architectural models is not very different from building railroading models. It's basically building a scratchbuilt structure you designed. The attention to detail and scale are the same. My friends often comment on how I can build something so quickly and with such detail and patience. My response is always that I've been doing it for about 10 years now.

My passion for model railroading has not diminished as I've grown older; instead, it's increased. This past summer (2018), I achieved my NMRA Golden Spike Award. I built a module. The whole process took me about a month. The only thing I didn't know how to do was the electrical component. Luckily, my dad is an expert and taught me how. I am currently working on the requirements of my Master Model Railroader's Certificate and really close to finishing my Chief Dispatcher's Certificate. I am also beginning my Structures and Author's Certificates as well. The only trouble is I am about 5 to 10 years out from having my own house where I can build my own railroad.

In addition to my professional development with an architecture internship this summer, I am also working on the Conway Scenic Railroad, where I am training to become a trainman. This education is adding a whole new perspective on railroading to my repertoire. Along with being a dream of mine since I was a kid, it's amazing to see the families who were just like mine come excitedly onto the trains. Working on the railroad is a lot of work and very hard; however, it's always worth it when you see little kid's faces as they enjoy their time on the train — especially when those faces mirror your own from when you were their age.



## 2019 October Women in Model Railroading: Brenna Whitney Cont



**Above:** My architectural studies have helped me with spatial concepts and the use of form and function. These concepts and many others undoubtedly will help me become a far better modeler. Architecture, in many ways, is basically model railroading school!

The biggest thing missing from my story, however, is the push back I've received over the years. Being a kid and having a passion for trains is difficult enough, but add being a girl on top of that, oh man... I've had anything from sympathetic looks while walking around a train show with my dad (because I apparently must be bored) to being told the dolls are in the next aisle if I want to look at something "more interesting." My other favorite was the vendor who was asking my little brother Colin questions while I was the one looking at the trains. Because he's the boy, he must be the train person. The truth is, he could not care less about trains.

When I started operating, it was common for my dad to be invited places, but not

me. Part of this was due to my age, and I am sure part of it was because I was a girl. I get that, and I understand that it took a while for me to prove my sincere interest in model railroading to other modelers. Eventually, my dad and I operated regularly, and we rarely split up when we ran. It was a great experience and a marvelous bonding time between us. Where he goes, I go, and vice versa. People assumed because

I was a kid, I only wanted to run the trains really fast.

The truth is, I (and kids like me) am the future of the hobby, but there is an educational curve for us. I needed to be taught what was right and appropriate. Everyone wonders why model railroading is a dying hobby, and I have the answer for them, at least in part. Youth are being pushed away. If it weren't for my parents, Brian and Jill Bollinger, Kim and Steve Lamb, and Bruce Robinson, there is a high chance the hobby could have pushed me away to the point that I wouldn't want to be part of it. I know there are young ones who were pushed out and lost interest in the hobby because it wasn't fun anymore. The big "kids" didn't

want us little kids to participate or touch their trains.

I know there will always be that kid who comes bouncing down into your basement and just wants to see the train go really fast around the layout. But please, take a chance with those young ones; your influence can make a huge difference in their life and, in turn, yours. A lot of kids want to be a part of the hobby. Bruce was the person who watched as I came bounding into his basement and observed as I learned how to operate and become the next generation of the hobby. He could have pushed me away, only wanting people who were generations older than I am to operate his railroad.

I am now 21 years old and will graduate with my bachelor's degree in architecture next year. I plan on pursuing a master's degree soon thereafter. I am, in part, who I am because of this hobby. Don't let the hobby die with you. Take the time to share, mentor, and work with others, teaching them what you have learned. *Please!*

*Signed, the girl who didn't give up*  
Brenna Whitney

**Below:** My HUB Module was used to achieve my Golden Spike Award. I really loved building the structures scenery and overall scene. I cannot wait to have my own layout at some point.





**2019 October**

**Martin A. Megregian earned Master Model Railroader 633.**

**Dennis Krausman earned Master Model Railroader 622.**

**2019 November**

**Ray Clifford earned Master Model Railroader 637.**

**Thomas W. Gasior earned Master Model Railroader 635.**

**John Feraca earned Master Model Railroader 643.**

**November 2019      Editor's Column by Cinthia Priest**

## People Skills — For Introverts

Several members commented on my recent editorial, “People Skills” [September 2019 Observation Car], whereby I pointed out how some members — typically newbies — feel shunned, unwelcome, or just plain ignored at NMRA meetings, shows, or other events. As a self-proclaimed introvert, I opined my viewpoints on how those members who share similar traits may be perceived during those first few encounters with a new group or activity.

To give a little perspective on how an introvert might think, we typically build up a lot of anticipation and excitement in our minds as the date of the event draws near. However, as we step into that first meeting and survey the landscape — no matter how much we’ve been looking forward to meeting like-minded enthusiasts — we suddenly become very self-conscious and perhaps a little anxious. *Will I be accepted? Will they think my ideas are dumb?* And the list goes on. What Division members do next to make this person feel welcome and at ease, as I discussed in my previous editorial, goes a long way toward retaining this new member. This month’s Mail Car [page 8] has a few more suggestions as well.

Making one feel welcome is vital to engaging that new member. However, it’s not all up to the Division Superintendent or other members to retain introverts. The newbie/introvert has a responsibility as well. Might I offer some suggestions for anyone to consider when encountering new social events? [I adapted these ideas from a blog I read, “How to Network Like a Pro (Even if You’re an Introvert),” by Jo Ann Endo, IHI’s Senior Managing Editor, Digital Content & Blog.]

## Observation Car


NMRA Magazine Editor Cinthia Priest

First, rather than filling your mind with dreadful thoughts regarding the mental energy it takes to socialize with new people, consider that others may feel the same as you and are also working up the nerve to strike up a conversation. Initiating a chat with other members may be doing *them* a favor. Rather than being a consumer only at this meeting, you (the newbie/introvert) might find you have resources, talents, or skills that could help the “seasoned” member with their model railroading challenges.

If you find yourself at a loss for words in social gatherings, come prepared with open-ended questions as conversation starters. For example, you could start with “How many [freight cars, locomotives, structures, etc.] in your collection are scratchbuilt versus ready-to-run?” If you want to continue the conversation, follow up with “What is your favorite weathering technique?” The person with whom you are conversing may return the favor by asking you the same questions, so put some thought into your responses beforehand.

Bring a model (in progress or finished) and be prepared to honestly discuss modeling/detailing/weathering victories, as well as opportunities for improvement. Be open and willing to receive constructive feedback and offer only words that build up others as they navigate their own modeling journey.

Hopefully, these few tips will encourage you to take a baby step out of your comfort zone and connect with fellow improvement-minded members who share your passion for the hobby.





**I**t seems a little odd to be writing an article for a women's column in the *NMRA MAGAZINE*, but when I asked the ladies in our club to do one, they were reluctant to do so but did agree to give me the information to write the articles. Perhaps I should introduce myself. I'm the President of the Citrus Model Railroad Club in Inverness, Florida. I'm also the Superintendent for the Western Division of the Sunshine Region NMRA.

The Citrus Model Railroad Club was one of those organizations with the unspoken mythology that it was a man's world. Then along came Mary Ruth Schweitzer. Mary is a good-hearted, outgoing lady who, like Will Rodgers, "never met a person she didn't like." Mary's first visit to the club was during the county fair in 2011. Mary noticed a license plate on the front of club member Adam Jablonski's truck. Being the outgoing person that she is, Mary asked Adam, "what's with the train plate?" Adam explained there was a train club on the fairgrounds and he was going there to work the trains for the fair visitors. Adam invited Mary to come along with him, to which she agreed. He showed her around the club, explaining the various layouts and introduced her to members working that day. I think Mary came back to the club every day of the fair and met more of the members.

Over the next six months, Mary's attended nearly every function the club had. Tuesday N-scale work sessions, Saturday open house, and our monthly joint meeting with all three gauges. Mary's bubbling personality won over the hearts and minds of the men and, in October 2011, Mary joined the club as its first female member.

Unlike most model railroaders, Mary had no early memories of having a train set when she was growing up or of a family member who had a train set. Mary's interest in model railroading came to life when she met Adam at the county fair.

Mary will tell you that she doesn't know a thing about model railroading, but she does. Without thinking about it, she has absorbed a tremendous amount of knowledge about model railroading. The club operates



three layouts, an N-scale layout, an HO-scale layout, and a G-scale around-the-wall layout. Mary operates on the N-scale layout using both DC and DCC controls. She handles both systems quite well. Mary particularly loves the big G-scale layout.

The G-scale layout fell in disrepair over the years because no one wanted to get up on a ladder to maintain it. Along came Ted Hass, one of our N-scale members, who also liked the G-scale layout. So, the two of them got out the ladders, put on their tool belts, and went to work. It wasn't long until they had the railroad running smoothly again, and Mary is in second heaven when she can show the kids the big trains.

Mary's love and enthusiasm for model railroading become apparent when she takes visitors on one of her tours through the club and explains the complexities of the layouts.

Mary is not only a member of the N-scale group, which meets on Tuesdays,

but also works the N- and G-scale layouts on Saturdays when we are open to the public. She has also become the public relations person for the club. She is on hand to meet and greet everyone who walks in the door at every club function.



## 2019 December

Article & photo by James Robertson

**M**arlene Morycki, better known as “Marley,” is a petite lady with a huge appetite for trains. As a child, Marley grew up in a small town in Michigan with a daily train clacking along the tracks. Marley couldn’t resist listening to the attractive and unmistakable sound of a train whistle. Even as a teenager, her love of trains persisted, and her mother bought her a Lionel train set. However, like most parents, Marley’s mother did not permit her to play with it except on special occasions, i.e., Christmas. As the years rolled by with college, marriage, and children, Marley never lost the dream. Her family helped. Both her sons had train sets, and her husband built a pike.

I first met Marley when she contacted us and offered to donate her late husband’s railroad to the club. I went to her home to pick up the donated items, and she said the only thing she wanted was one locomotive, several cars, and perhaps a loop of track on a board so that she could set up her Christmas tree all year round, changing the decorations as the holidays and seasons changed. She was going to put a village under the tree with the train. That little train set and board rekindled her love of trains.

Several months later, Marley joined the Citrus Model Railroad Club. Having rekindled her interest in model railroading, she began working in N and HO scale. She said she has learned a great deal since joining the club and continues to learn from the patient and knowledgeable members. They are always willing to share their knowledge, expertise, and experience with her.

Marley is a teacher in the Citrus County school system and is a short-timer.

She retires at the end of this school session and is looking forward to spending more time with the club. She is already an asset to the club with her quick understanding of how things work. She can run the N-scale DC system and is learning the ins and outs of the Club’s DCC system. On the

November 2019) are assets to the club. When the club has visitors, Marley can hold her own in a conversation about the hobby, the club, and her personal interest in model railroading. Marley is truly an asset to the hobby. 🚂



HO layout, she has operated way freights, passenger trains, and locals (we never let a newcomer operate alone; we always assign a seasoned operator with a newbie.) She has done landscaping, tree making, track cleaning, and many other tasks necessary to keep a model railroad running and looking good.

Marley has started a retirement bucket list. At the top of the list is an extended tour of the National Parks by rail. After that trip, she will begin checking off other train excursions.

Marley is the second woman to join the CMRC. Both Marley and Mary Ruth Schweitzer (see “Women in Model Railroading,” *NMRA MAGAZINE*



**2019 December**

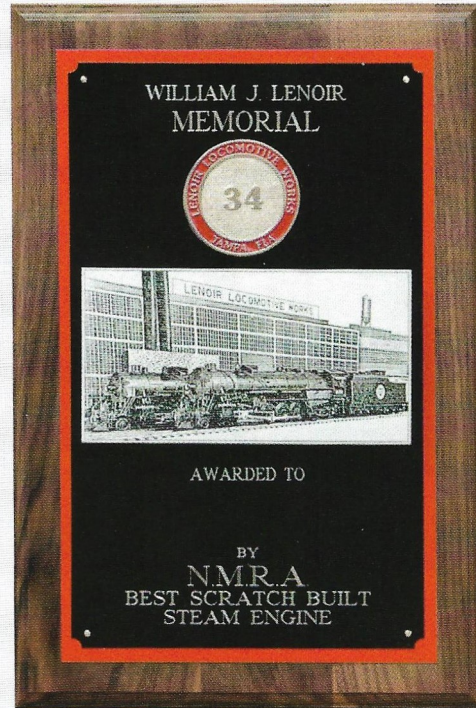
**WILLIAM J. LENOIR AWARD**

**Special Promotion - Plan now to enter for a chance to win the William J. Lenoir Award for the Best Scratchbuilt Steam Locomotive**

**Who was William J. Lenoir?**

Bill Lenoir was born in Chicago on September 30, 1910, and was a life-long fan of the Chicago Great Western Railroad. Bill was a master model railroad builder who was internationally known for building highly detailed O-scale steam locomotives from scratch. He built almost 300 locomotives, and photographs of his locomotives have appeared in numerous books and magazines.

In 1931, Bill built his first steam locomotive, a New York Central 4-6-4, which was chosen for the cover of the very first issue of Al Kalmbach's *Model Railroader* Magazine in 1934. In Milwaukee, Bill met with other O-scale pioneers and united with them as charter members of the National Model Railroad Association in 1935. Bill's charter member number is 34.



*Photo by Greg Komar and story by Gail Komar, MMR® trustee for the Bill Lenoir Plaque*

**2019 December**

**Michael Wolf earned Master Model Railroader 640.**

**Neal Anderson earned Master Model Railroader 641.**

**Master Model Railroaders who for the last ten years were published in the national magazine were numbers 428 – 643; meaning 215 people earned their MMRs in these past ten years.**